Week ending October 25 1958

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WILL HONGKONG BE NEXT ON MAO'S LIST?

by Harry Hopkins

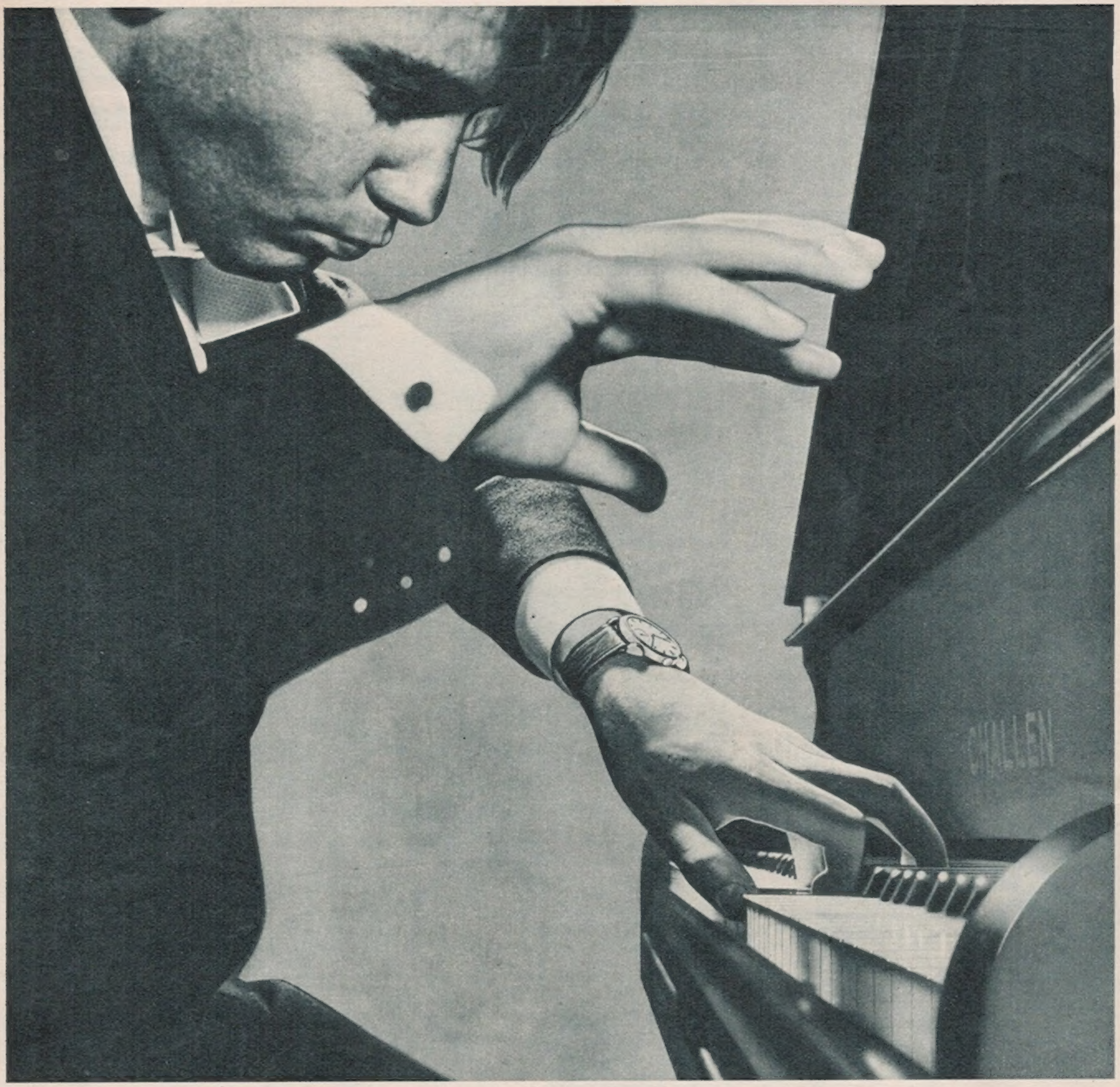
A. J. CRONIN'S

Best-selling novel

The Northern Light

THE GREATEST RAID OF ALL

How the commandos wrecked St. Nazaire, by C. E. Lucas Phillips



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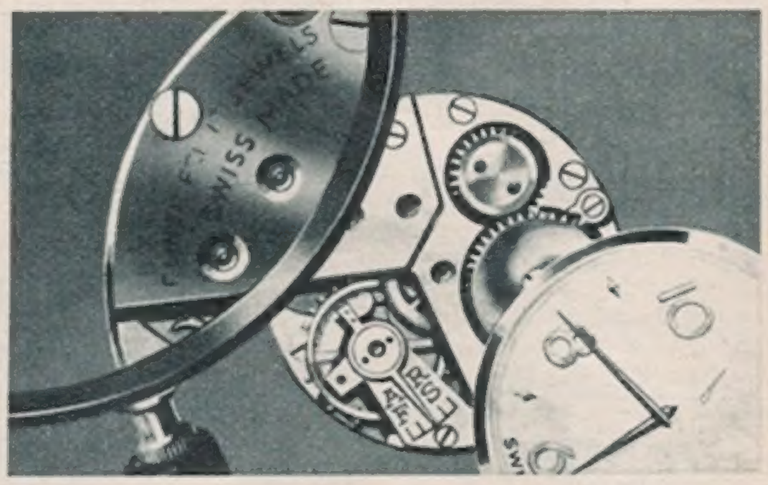

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The Cover

IF Father thinks he's going to get his newspaper in time to worry over the headlines in bed this morning, he's forgotten the pulling power of Penelope Panda and the Jolly Jungle Folk. After all, the land of make-believe has its world-shattering troubles too—even if the residents *do* seem to get more fun out of them. But little Miss Barefeet had better beware, says artist Laurent. "Standing near that draughty doormat is likely to land her on the carpet with Mother."

Free Speech

JOHN BULL and ILLUSTRATED pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post, and in our new feature, "We Advise."

Free Houses

The chief constable—salary £2,200 a year—moves into a rent-free house.

So does the town clerk, who draws more than £3,000.

The same applies to the transport manager, the housing manager, the health officer, the city surveyor. . . .

I want to know why public servants such as these, with incomes far above the national average, should be provided with free housing.

They must be well able to buy their own homes. They should do so, instead of living on the backs of the less well off, who foot the bill. —N. R., Harley Street, London, W.1.

Non-Thinkers

We have a new threat to industrial efficiency—the highly educated half-wits. They are emerging in droves from the universities.

I am the managing director of a small manufacturing concern. For years I have been seeking a junior executive who combines high academic qualifications with ability to act sensibly, on his own initiative.

Plenty of men with impressive degrees have tried the job. But in an emergency all have come tapping at my door—paralysed by the prospect of taking a decision on their own.

The modern products of our educational system merely absorb knowledge like a sponge. They may know, but they cannot think.—L. H. G., Scunthorpe.

Tucking In

When will manufacturers of sheets and blankets realize that modern spring and rubber mattresses are usually twice as deep as the old hair-filled models.

In consequence, bedclothes should be at least six inches wider to give a reasonable "tuck-in."—PHYLLIS SAINT-DUISNE, Furze Hill, Fordingbridge, Hants.

"A difficult problem," says a bedding manufacturer. "The depth of modern mattresses varies greatly. If sheets are too wide, they become awkward to handle when making the bed. Most of us are now providing widths for each depth of mattress."

Standard Scot

Recently I visited Scotland after an interval of twenty-five years. On my earlier trip it had appeared quite a different country from England — particularly with its characteristic grey stone buildings, pleasing shop fronts and typical streets. But not now.

During this second visit I was surprised to see council housing estates similar to those in England. Many of the grey stone buildings had been painted white. Shop fronts had been modernized so that they looked exactly like those in the south.

If the same thing is happening in Wales and Northern Ireland, the British Isles will become standardized like the United States, where every main street looks much the same. I would not like to see this happen.—MISS C. F. POWNALL, Homefield Road, Wimbledon, London.

Weight Waste

All sorts of mechanical devices are being used to speed work on building sites. Yet bricklayers still use the traditional small bricks. In

consequence, time is wasted. Why not use bricks of twice the present size?—S. R. PEARSON, Fuller Street, Cleethorpes.

"Double the size and you double the weight," says a building contractor. "That would result in slower—not faster—laying."

Slow Play

The Football Association is obviously determined to stamp out ungentlemanly tactics by professional "smart boys."

But is it not desirable now to alter the rules to prevent time wasting by winning teams during the last few minutes of the game? I'm thinking of such tactics as slow-motion free kicks and dawdling over throws-in.

In cases of obvious time wasting the referee should be given power —after cautioning the captain of the offending team—to add fifteen minutes to the playing time.—JOHN TAYLOR, Hemper Lane, Sheffield, 8.

"We have just sent out a memorandum to referees instructing them to take strict action against such practices," says the Football Association. "Referees already have power to delay the final whistle where there's deliberate time wasting."

Mud Bath

It had been raining when I came up behind a lorry on the road to Scotland. Within seconds my windscreen was covered with mud—because the lorry did not have flaps behind its wheels.

Surely there is a law making it obligatory to have wheel flaps?—N. CAMERON, Uppingham, Rutland.

"Lorries are not obliged to have protected rear wheels if the body design makes this impracticable," says the Ministry of Transport.

Out of Line

I am appalled by the number of motorists who ignore the new "double white line" marking on roads. They overtake, even though the marking is a warning not to do so.

The scheme is excellent and it should go a long way to reducing accidents on busy highways. But I should like to think that legislation will soon be introduced giving it the force of law.—G. W. T., Worksop.

"The idea is still in an experimental stage," says the Ministry of Transport. "Generally, it is working well. Although it does not yet have legal backing, a motorist who ignores it and finds himself in an accident may have very little defence in court."

Trial By Jury

As a magistrate, I answer our critics by pointing out that everyone appearing before us can elect to take his case to trial by jury. Ninety-nine per cent prefer to accept our judgment. — W. H. COLCLOUGH, Stoke-on-Trent.

"Persons convicted by magistrates can always appeal," says a barrister. "But there's a right to trial by jury only if the maximum sentence magistrates can impose exceeds three months."

Washout

On one of our rare fine days I rushed out to dry my washing in good, clean air. But I was met by the stench of a neighbour's bonfire.

Gardens produce a good deal of

rubbish, not all of it fit for compost. If local councils collected it every year, the smoke nuisance caused by people having to burn such refuse would be prevented. So would a threat to health.—MRS. D. EVANS, Surrey Grove, Sutton, Surrey.

"Under the Public Health Act, local authorities are obliged only to collect refuse which directly endangers health," says a municipal officer. "To extend the present collection system would increase the rates. And it would not be practicable in many areas because of the enormous quantities of garden rubbish which accumulate."

Silent Pews

The plea for congregations to question clergy in church (Free Speech, September 27) reminds me of the time when I tried just that.

I invited the worshippers to say anything that was on their minds. And I was met by blank silence.

I repeated the invitation. Again silence. So we had another hymn.

As far as the Church of England is concerned, the average worshipper prefers the service to be conducted on orthodox lines. Afterwards, in a free-and-easy atmosphere, points can be discussed. — THE REV. S. J. BRYANT, Graham Road, West Green, London, N.15.

Home Work

The home industries of centuries ago seem to be returning.

In my street, we go to Joan's house for hairdressing, to Eve to

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Free Speech

continued from page 3

buy home-grown fruit and vegetables, and to Pat for piano lessons.

All this, coupled with our husbands' do-it-yourself talents, makes us largely self-sufficient. What mothers cannot do by "out" working (JOHN BULL, September 27), they make up at home.

I forecast that the idea will catch on. And it is a good way to deflate shop prices.—MRS. ELSIE M. STARKS, Wood Rise, Eastcote, Pinner, Middlesex.

Hard Luck

My joint of New Zealand lamb was frozen so hard that it hit the dish with a loud clank when I arrived home with it.

I wondered how much ice I had paid for. So I immediately weighed the joint, then again when it had thawed out. My ice cost me 1s. 1½d. It seems cheaper to buy English meat.—M. R., St. Albans.

"When a joint is taken out of cold storage its weight increases for the first twelve hours, because moisture from the warmer atmosphere is attracted to it," says a New Zealand refrigeration expert. "Then the weight gradually returns to normal as the temperature of the meat reaches that of the air. That's what happened in this case.

"There's no ice—in the sense of frozen water—in New Zealand meat. It must be remembered that all meat—frozen or not—ultimately loses weight."

Safety Fast

The new, larger road safety signs on the roads are certainly an improvement, but as many accidents are caused by motorists taking bends too fast would it not make for greater safety if the signs at these points also gave the safe maximum speed at which the corner should be taken?

This information is given to railway engine drivers.—H. W. KIRTLAND, Westlands Road, Hull.

"An interesting idea," says the A.A. "But remember that any maximum safe speed at corners must vary according to weather conditions, the car and the skill of the driver."

No More Cards

At the end of the war we were told that identity cards were no longer needed. Yet we are still being asked to produce them if optical or dental treatment is given through the National Health Service.

What is the position? Do we or do we not need our identity cards?—JOHN BLUNDELL, Isca Road, Caerleon, Newport, Mon.

"You don't need your identity card any longer," says the Ministry of Health. "At the beginning of the Health Service the registration number on your card was used as your Health Service number and most people kept their cards simply to remind them of the number.

"That system has been dropped. Your dentist or optician will now be able to get a new National Health number for you, although most people will go on with the old registration number."

Costly Curves

I am wondering why house builders insist on installing windows with square corners which collect dirt and rain, as well as being difficult to clean.

Modern buses, trams and rail coaches have windows with rounded corners.

Surely the extra cost of fitting them in houses would be negligible?—H. E. M., Birmingham.

"The cost would be anything but negligible," says the Building Research Station. "Rounding off internal angles of the wooden frames used for most houses would be difficult and costly.

"The window frames of public vehicles are usually made of steel, which simplifies the matter."

Sweep-down

While in Scotland, I saw ladders attached to many of the chimneys. I was told that they are for sweeps, as in Scotland chimneys are cleaned

from the top—not from the bottom, as in England.

Is this a better way than the one used farther south?—MRS. DOROTHY FAREBROTHER, Thirsk Road, Mitcham, Surrey.

The downward method—known as "roping"—is also used in the south, for tall buildings. A heavy iron ball is attached to the brush, which is then lowered down the chimney. It is more often employed in Scotland because many chimneys there are of different design from those common in England.

Not Suited

Income tax relief for working clothes is most unfair; it seems to be all in favour of manual workers.

If you wear overalls—which are quite cheap, wear well and protect other clothing—you get an allowance. Office workers get nothing.

But most office workers have always to look reasonably well dressed and a medium-priced suit lasts only a year before cuffs, sleeves and seat are worn out. And shirts and collars have to be laundered.

I will say this for the tax department: this is a case where officials aren't looking after themselves. Most of the tax men work in offices.—R. WHITEHOUSE, High Lane, Manchester.

"But we can't look after ourselves," says the Board of Inland Revenue. "M.P.s decide tax allowances."

Fish Flash

My brother, who recently returned from Japan, says that many families there keep a type of catfish to warn of approaching earthquakes.

This fish is particularly sensitive to earth tremors. When one is coming, it dashes madly round its tank. The family then goes straight into the open—out of danger from falling masonry.—MRS. S. MASTERS, Bloomfield Road, Woolwich.

"In Europe, too, there's a fish which is exceptionally sensitive to the weather," says a fish expert. "It's a species of loach—Latin name Misgurnis Fossilis—*which becomes very lively at the approach of thunder. It is common in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and parts of Russia."*

Will Hongkong be next on Mao's list?

continued from previous page

of the Star Ferry, goods trains run through to Canton, and from Canton return. Passengers still have to get down at the frontier and walk across. But that didn't stop more than a million of them doing so last year.

Hongkong citizens go across to visit relatives in Red China. Students study in their native tongue in Canton University, returning to their Hongkong homes for the vacations. Some farmers have land on both sides of the Sham Chun frontier river. Half the food that Hongkong imports comes from China.

Here—should Mao be bent on stepping up the tension—is one exposed nerve that is readily accessible. In the troubled days of 1950, after the Communist take-over, fresh food supplies across the frontier were from time to time suddenly cut off.

If the halting of food imports from China can embarrass Hongkong, the stepping up from the Chinese end of another important import—people—could further imperil the colony's delicate equilibrium.

For today, here as in West Berlin, vast numbers have "voted with their feet," and, with more than two and a half million people—twice her prewar population, with which her services are designed to cope—Hongkong is bulging dangerously at the seams.

This, it is true, is by no means new. Hongkong's growth has always been nourished in this strange fashion on the troubles of the mainland.

And yet one thing is new—and it could throw a dangerous spanner into the classic, free-for-all, self-adjusting works on which Hongkong's fabulous success has been built.

In the old days, when too many refugees came in from China and things became very tough, the human tide would turn and flow back again.

They come to stay

But now, however meagre the rice bowl, the people still come. The squatter villages of sacking and flattened petrol cans and old packing cases climb crazily up and down the Hongkong hillsides, regularly devastated by fire.

Tenement buildings, fantastically honeycombed with cubicles and bedspaces, squirm with humanity.

In 1956 a survey showed 63,000 people living in sacking shelters on tenement rooftops.

Reluctantly, against its principles, the Hongkong Government finally imposed a quota, balancing incomings against outgoings. Along the seventeen-mile frontier there now stretched a police-patrolled wire fence.

Yet still the people swarmed in—by sampan at night, through smuggling organizations working from Macao, by perilous trips across the marshes.

Then in 1954, the Hongkong Government made another drastic departure from its traditional policy. For on Christmas night, 1953, a particularly disastrous fire had swept a squatter village, making 50,000 people homeless.

The government was forced at last to accept responsibility for housing the squatters.

Now the white, seven-storey squatter resettlement blocks are new landmarks on the Kowloon skyline. Built on low-cost lines, with a population density that would seem impossible in Europe, they have communal latrines, washing spaces and cubicles on each floor.

Yet the task remains fantastic. For to Hongkong's natural increase by births of 1,360 a week must be added the thousand or more newcomers who sneak in illegally from China.

And there is evidence that Red China—which protested indignantly against the British entry restrictions—is not unmindful of the dual advantage of lightening her own burden of "surplus" mouths while piling them on to the breaking back of Hongkong.

As Mao Tse-tung reopens his intermittent radio offensive against the Capitalist "running dogs" who infest this Chinese island, it is not too difficult to understand the Americans who, in 1950, when the radio was again crackling with a rich flow of vituperation, evacuated their women and children from Hongkong.

The Chase National Bank and a number of other U.S. business houses hastily closed their doors and departed. An American journalist wrote an article under the title: *The Last Days of Hongkong.*

Was he perhaps, after all, just a little too early?

The Old Hands of Hongkong receive any such suggestion with mingled incredulity and amusement. Fighting words over the ether? They have heard it all so many, many times before. More particularly—with the appropriate substitutions—from Chiang Kai-shek himself. Before the war Chiang ardently laid claim not only to Hongkong but also to large slices of Indo-China, Burma and India.

In fact, they would tell you, since Mao's triumph, Communist discipline has ensured a quieter life on the frontier, where Chinese behaviour, if frigid, is also efficient and rigidly "correct."

In a Hongkong street a refugee sets up shop. Every night hundreds are smuggled in—and with them, ready to strike, come Communists

And if, like President Roosevelt at Yalta, Mao insists that Hongkong represents the ill-gotten spoils of "outdated British Colonialism" and rightfully belongs to China, even then the Hongkong Old Hands are not unduly worried.

For that analysis, they know, is oversimplified.

Hongkong was never a colony in anything but a formal sense. It is not even particularly British.

It is a world institution, a vast international free market, warehouse and shop—and today one of the few bases left for world-ranging free enterprise.

There were no "natives" here to be exploited; indeed they flocked here as if to a gold rush—and Hongkong is the fruit of the fertile partnership that ensued, a partnership of Chinese industry and know-how and British order and finance.

When, back in 1840, the British China merchants, sick of confinement to the narrow frontage of their factories in Canton, had demanded of the Emperor a place of their own, the island they were offered was a malarious rock, inhabited by only a few poor fisherfolk.

Yet soon the buildings were rising—and have never ceased to rise since. The Chinese-British partnership which accomplished this miracle remains as strong as ever—and as limited. Its sole object: mutual enrichment.

At a time when, in true colonies, new, more liberal constitutions are coming into effect, Hongkong remains firmly undemocratic, without one elected member on the Governor's councils.

But absurdly obsolete or not, Hongkong is happy to go on betting on its continuing usefulness—to China as to the rest of the world. By its wits, it knows, it must live—or die.

And to show that it does not intend to die (rather than from any particular belief in the efficacy of arms), it has over the last ten years been vigorously putting its defences in order.

Old soldiers among the reinforcements now reaching Hongkong will find miles of new roads built through the New Territory borderlands, bridges strengthened to take tanks, and hidden strongpoints constructed.

Perilously hemmed in by steep hillsides, the main airport at Kai-Tak has been given a new one-and-a-half-mile runway, built out—an old Hongkong custom—into the sea.

Caught largely unprepared in 1941, Hongkong fell to the Japs in eighteen days. Today it might last a little longer. But there is little room to manoeuvre, and now as then the defenders' Achilles Heel is Hongkong's water-supply. Half is drawn from reservoirs in the New Territories—and even with these the taps are cut off for hours every day.

Even greater internal perils would face Hongkong in event of a determined siege from China. For within the gates perpetually stands a vast Trojan Horse, prepared to open up whenever Chairman Mao should give the order. The Peking-orientated "Federation" of trade unions has through its affiliated unions a paid-up membership almost twice that of the Formosa-minded "T.U.C."—and dominates the vital dockyards, transport and public utility spheres.

Half Hongkong's schools are in private Chinese hands, and though the Director of Education now has power to close them if used for Communist propaganda, obviously with China on his doorstep his dilemma is enormous. Firm control is hopeless.

Below the surface of Hongkong life, the luxury hotels, the courtly old *compradores*, the smart, smiling, American-style business men, the keen young students, lie the unfathomable depths of a great Oriental city.

Here flourish the Triad secret societies, which three centuries ago pledged themselves to the overthrow of the Manchu-Ching dynasty but now are more simply dedicated to "protection" and prostitution rackets and to blackmail.

In old, pre-Mao China style, politics, "squeeze," trade union activity and gangsterism are apt to be all inextricably mixed together.

Police control is normally swift and firm. The carrying of arms has been made a capital offence. An identity card system is in force.

But probably the best hope—if a somewhat desperate one—lies in those new, white flat-blocks, rising on the squatter resettlement estates, which might yet make individual citizens of the rootless, impoverished, anonymous human swarms of Hongkong.

When in 1951, at American insistence, an embargo was clapped on all exports to China, Hongkong was struck a blow which elsewhere would have been pronounced mortal. Yet today her merchanting skills have been redirected towards Malaya, Indonesia, Australia, Africa.

With the aid of industrialists who have fled from Shanghai, her industrial life has been vastly expanded, and Kowloon now has some of the most modern factories in the world.

Alarmed by this antlike industry, Germany, France, Canada and other countries have put quotas or tariffs on Hongkong's products—and Lancashire would like Britain to do likewise.

But if Hongkong's imports may spell unemployment in Britain's cotton towns, trade restrictions directed against Hongkong could spell international disaster. As ever, Hongkong's margin of security is precarious.

There are only thirty-nine years to run on our lease of the New Territories, leased from China for ninety-nine years in June, 1898, in order to supply breathing space, a back garden and reservoir for the ceded island and Kowloon.

Yet, in face of the prospect of such drastic mutilation, Hongkong remains as buoyantly confident as ever. New commercial buildings and apartment blocks reach higher and higher into the sky, till the place—visually as well as spiritually—begins to resemble that other island, Manhattan.

Enjoying their boom, turning over their pounds sterling and U.S. dollars and gold bars and Swiss francs in the colony's many banks, "Communist" or "Capitalist," the hustlers of Hongkong, European and Chinese alike, watch with ill-concealed distaste the unbusinesslike—not to say, dangerous—goings-on around those other "offshore islands" to their north.

The few restless nights they have are occasioned not so much by Communists as by possible new tariffs—and Americans like General MacArthur and Mr. Dulles.

For in Chinese waters the antithesis between the British and American philosophies of international politics is complete. Out here the Americans have always been missionaries; and Chiang Kai-shek was their prize convert.

Lesson for the world

The British, on the other hand, since the days when they waxed rich on the export of tea and the import of opium, have always been traders.

Up in Formosa, the Americans are still fighting the Good Fight, while down in Hongkong the British would still trade with the Devil himself—having escertained that his money was good.

A world dangerously worn to a frazzle by its ideological obsessions may well find in Hongkong's attitude the more useful corrective.

As China, still the "Middle Country" in the eyes of her proud, tough, intelligent and industrious people, modernizes, industrializes, she may well push, with all the weight of her 580 millions, against the ill-defined borderlands of India and the rich peninsula of south-east Asia where millions of overseas Chinese watch her progress with a proprietory light in their eyes.

As this giant among nations, now thoroughly roused from her long torpor, feels her strength, almost inevitably, and perhaps even without intention, she will threaten the peace of the old world.

If that threat is to be safely absorbed, patience, skill, calm, will be needed—and nowhere have those requisite qualities been so amply developed and demonstrated as in Hongkong, whose merchants for more than a century, by the magic of mutual self-interest, have had the Chinese Tiger feeding from their hands.

Mr. Dulles might do worse than spend his next holiday there. THE END

Catch a falling star

by N. J. CRISP

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN HESELTINE

Andy was top of the bill no longer—but he was too proud to admit it. And that was the thing June could not forgive

WHEN Andy Chilcott returned to his home town, there was nobody to meet him. He lagged behind the crowd getting off the train, and when he came into the forecourt there was only one taxi left. His hand was on the door handle when he remembered that he couldn't really afford to use taxis any more. He couldn't afford anything much.

He shrugged and climbed in. The driver didn't know him. He just said, "Where to?"

Andy was a little put out. Someone, even if only one person, ought to have recognized him, to have said, "It's Andy Chilcott, isn't it? I've seen you on television."

But there was just the taxi driver looking stonily at him in the driving mirror. Andy said, "The Grand Hotel."

Ever since he'd known that he was coming, he had been trying to decide what he should do when this moment arrived. He still didn't know. More than anything, he wanted to see June, but whether she wanted to see him was another matter. Perhaps he should go to the hotel, stay there, and tomorrow morning catch the train back to London. She wasn't likely to be at the Charity Ball that night . . . and if nothing was achieved, at least the rupture would not be final; the door would still be open, however slightly.

But when the porter opened the cab door at the hotel, Andy said, "Would you take my suitcase? I'll be back later."

The taxi driver said, "Somewhere else?"

Andy wondered how June's sister felt about it all. She might be able to help him—if she wanted to. He said, "Do you know a garage called Ramsey's—a small place in the Osborne district?"

The driver nodded, and swung down the hill into the industrial section.

AT the garage, Andy paid the cab, and stood looking at the two petrol pumps, the greasing bay, the little workshop, the small house to one side with a line of washing flying at the back of it. It seemed a long time ago that June and he had spent so many evenings here, talking with Len and Mary, playing bridge, making plans.

Len Ramsey came out of the workshop wiping his hands on a piece of rag, and his round, placid face split into a surprised grin. "Andy! I read you'd be in town." His hand was toughened and calloused. "How's my famous brother-in-law? It's good to see you."

The grin seemed genuine, Andy thought, alert for reservations. He said: "I thought I'd look you up. It's been quite a time."

"Too long." Len was still gripping his hand. "Mind you," he said hastily, "I know what it must be like. You can't expect to keep in touch. Still, I'm glad you came. Come and see Mary. Jim," he shouted, addressing a youth half under a car, "look after things for a minute."

The front room was still much the same. There was a three-piece suite, a sideboard, a bookcase, a standard lamp, two occasional tables and a television set. There wasn't really room for all of it in the twelve-by-twelve room, and the furniture was cramped.

Len came back with Mary and said, "There he is," triumphantly, as if he'd had difficulty in convincing her.

Mary said, "Hallo, Andy," and shook hands. Andy realized immediately that there were reservations there all right. She was as withdrawn and distant as courtesy would allow.

Mary said, "I'm just giving the children their tea. Would you like some?"

Len said, "He'd rather have a beer, I'll bet."

"I would," Andy admitted.

Mary went out of the room. Andy sat down, sipping the beer Len poured for him. He didn't think Len would say anything about June. He would have to speak to Mary later.

Len said, "I saw your television shows. We had some friends in and I did some bragging. I said, 'I was at school with him. He was in my class. We played in the same football team, and he married my wife's kid sister'." He laughed. "My stock went up, I can tell you."

Andy said casually, "What did you think of the shows?"

"Wonderful." Len leaned forward enthusiastically. "Really clever stuff. Made me laugh anyway."

Andy noticed the almost involuntary qualification. And Len was too anxious, like a father reassuring a child.

Len said, "When is the next series?"

"It hasn't been finalised yet." The glib words slipped out, oiled with constant use. Andy asked himself bitterly when he was going to start telling the truth. There wasn't going to be any new series. He'd flopped. He was just another embryo star that had burned out.

HE thought of that ghastly interview with his agent. Sam had said, "I'm sorry, laddie. I did my best. Your contract's expired, and they're not renewing it."

It wasn't really a surprise, but Andy had almost managed to convince himself that it wasn't going to happen. He looked at his hands, and noticed dispassionately that his fingers were shaking. You were in a business; you got to what was regarded as the top in a hurry. You had to spend, live up to it, go to parties, be seen in the right places, entertain the right people, have a flat in the right district, have plenty of drinks on hand, run a fast sports car.

He remembered miserably how June had rebelled. She said you could be a big name in show business on your merits, and live a quiet private life. After one row he'd told her that she had the mentality of a grocer's wife. And that was when they split.

The truth was that he enjoyed the merry-go-round, the dizzy speed of the life, the revolving circle of faces. And if it cost money, it was an investment in his sort of business, and he was earning plenty.

Only now he wasn't. The merry-go-round was still spinning, and he had no job, no money. And no wife.

He'd said in a low voice, "What's gone wrong Sam?"

"I don't know, boy." Sam shook his head. He made a business of lighting a cigarette. "It sometimes happens. A man shoots his bolt, and. . . ." He blew out the match.

Andy watched, in uneasy fascination, the tiny puff of smoke dying into nothing. He said, with an effort, "We had good scriptwriters."

"The slickest in the business. But it's not the scriptwriters that do the show. It's you. Maybe you shouldn't try and put over smart stuff. But you chose the writers."

"I couldn't go on doing that domestic stuff for ever."

SAM said, "Maybe not." A nostalgic smile split his broad, jowly face. "It still makes me laugh, though. That was a good turn, clever observation, right in character." He wagged a stubby finger. "In the old days, you could have made a living for twenty years on the halls, just doing that one sketch and variations on it. But television is a monster. It gobbles up men and material as fast as we can feed 'em in. Some it spews out again. You're one of the unlucky ones."

"This is ridiculous," Andy said, with a futile spurt of anger. "I've had my own top line show, and now you're telling me that I'm finished."

"That's putting it a bit strong. You're not thirty yet, you're young, you've got time. I'm just saying that you've got to lower your sights, go a few steps down the ladder, take what you can get, and try and climb up again."

When Sam telephoned a couple of weeks later, Andy's heart leaped at the sound of the gravelly voice. He'd had another offer!

Sam said conversationally, "Changed your address, boy?"

Andy said, "It takes money to pay

"June, we've got to talk," Andy said urgently. She replied firmly, "There's nothing to talk about"

Catch a falling star

continued from page 6

the rent." There was no point in pretending with Sam.

"This might help a little bit. There's a Charity Ball cabaret at the Grand Hotel in your old home town. Neil Hansen was booked. He had to withdraw."

"I see." So he wasn't even first choice with his own people.

"They were tickled pink when I said I might be able to persuade you to appear," Sam said. "It seems they didn't ask for you in the first place because they thought you'd be tied up. Besides," he added, "June's there now, isn't she?"

"She's on holiday there," Andy said evasively.

"That's right. You told me."

It was money, Andy reflected. It was even a pretty good booking. But it was the possibility of seeing June again that made up his mind. . . .

He became aware that Len Ramsey was pressing another beer into his hand. He said: "How's life treating you, Len?"

"Not so bad. The garage business is a bit tough at the moment. There's a lot of competition, and it's slow building up. Still, I make enough to keep the roof over our heads." His smile belied his sober words.

So this was the happy man. A two-penny - halfpenny business, barely enough money to pay the bills, and only a wife, a home, and two children to show for it. Andy felt sick with envy.

Mary came in and said to Len, "Jim says Mr. Bartlett's here."

Len got up. "Excuse me, Andy. I've got to break the news to Mr. Bartlett that he has to have a new gearbox. That'll pay one or two bills."

LEFT alone with Mary, Andy looked at her, taking in her cool face, her cautious eyes. She looked very little like June, and less so at this moment.

He couldn't keep the words out of his mouth any longer. He said, "Do you see anything of June? Len didn't say. . . ."

"Len wouldn't." Her tone was cutting. "He won't hear a word against you. You're still a schoolboy hero to him."

"How is she?" Andy insisted.

"If you mean can she manage to live without you, yes, she can."

"I wrote to her, but she didn't answer."

"She's a woman, not a dog," Mary said wearily. "She doesn't have to come just because you whistle."

Andy said pleadingly, "Mary, give me a chance. Can't you see that I need help?"

She hesitated, then slowly undid her apron, and sat down. "I never expected to hear Andy Chilcott say that."

"Well, you're hearing it now." He lit a cigarette, not looking at her. "I want to find out when things started going wrong."

Mary said, "Remember the newspaper report when you were married? 'Radio star marries home town girl.' As if you were doing her a favour."

The idea shocked him. It wasn't true of course, and yet. . . . He'd been doing well at the time; he was going up. Feminine company wasn't hard to come by. Hadn't he felt the tiniest bit virtuous when he came back and married the girl he'd known for years? No, he argued, he loved her.

"I loved her," he said. "And after all, I didn't leave her. She left me."

"You just made it impossible for her."

"But she had anything she wanted."

"She had everything except what she wanted." Mary sighed, and pushed her dark hair back. "She didn't want to be a gilded exhibit in a continual party. She wanted a home, a husband, and children. Did she have that?"

Andy was silent.

Mary said, "And then of course there was Kay what's-her-name."

Andy flushed. Kay had been the singer in his show, a lithe, brilliant, black-haired creature. She had been grateful to him for giving her the chance, and showed it.

Things had changed a bit since then. She had been a hit. By the end, she was carrying the show. She was starting her own series in the autumn, and she was no longer grateful.

He said, "That was newspaper talk."

"All of it?"

"It seemed like good publicity at the time." *And God knows we needed some publicity,* he thought.

He said, "There was nothing in it."

"June didn't see why she should take it, and I don't blame her."

He crushed his cigarette in the ash tray. "What is she doing?"

"She's working. She's a good secretary. She can fend for herself."

He said urgently, "Is she still at the same address? I've got to see her."

Mary shook her head. "You're wasting your time. You haven't changed."

"Maybe I have." He stood up. "I'd like to say hallo to the kids, and then perhaps you'd let me phone for a taxi. . . ."

JUNE certainly hadn't changed. She was courteous, kindly, polite, and remote. She said interestedly, "And when is your next series starting?"

"It hasn't been finalized yet." There they were again, those stupid, cowardly words. *The truth,* something inside him yelled, *the truth.*

"What is it to be next?" she asked, with only the slightest trace of irony. "America? The Palladium?"

Now was his chance to tell her what had happened. She would feel differently then. But pride clamped his tongue like a bit. To ask her to take pity on him—that wasn't the way. They must come together on the same ground where they had met before.

"June," he said urgently, "we've got to talk."

"It's no good. There's nothing to talk about. Nothing's altered, has it?"

"We could try again. Perhaps I was wrong. . . ."

"I'm sorry," she said. "You must excuse me. I must go and change now."

"I must see you. . . ."

"You will," she said. "In an hour or two. I shall be at the ball."

"You're going?" His voice rose a shade higher in surprise than he wanted.

"With Mr. McCabe. The man I work for."

"I see."

There didn't seem to be anything more to say.

BACK at the hotel, Andy changed into his dinner jacket, and went downstairs. Dinner had started, and the ballroom was filling up.

Walter Lucas was playing soft melodies on the piano. Andy went across and said: "Hallo, Walter. You haven't changed a bit."

He liked and respected Walter Lucas. Walter had played for him, helped him, and advised him on that first regional radio show. He led a first-class orchestra that could have appeared anywhere in the country. But Walter wouldn't move. He wasn't a bit interested in London. He said, "This may be a small pond, but I'm a big fish in it. That's how I like it."

Walter looked at Andy now, and said coldly, "I haven't changed, eh? Well, you have. Do you think you're too big to attend rehearsal now?" The melody flowed on while he spoke.

Andy stared at him, speechless.

Walter said, "Five o'clock was rehearsal time, you may recall. Of course, you may not need our poor assistance. . . ."

Andy said, "Honestly, Walter, I didn't do it deliberately. I just plain forgot. . . . I'm terribly sorry."

Walter's mouth thawed a little under his clipped moustache. "What are we going to do about it?"

"We'll just have to do that old routine. Do you remember it?"

"I remember it." Walter nodded towards the tables, now becoming crowded. "Do you think they will?"

"Let's hope not."

Somebody came up to Andy, took him to a long table, showed him his place, and introduced him to his neighbours. Like nearly everyone in the ballroom, they were a little noisy, and rather gay.

Andy didn't see June arrive. He just looked up and there she was at the other end of the table. In her fitting blue dress, she looked like a blossoming flower. It was impossible to work out who she was with. There was a whole party down there, and they were all talking and laughing together. She didn't, or wouldn't, catch his eye.

He'd hoped to get to her when the dancing started in earnest, but he couldn't. She was moving round the ballroom now, talking to people, sometimes making notes, and, later, selling draw tickets. She studiedly avoided coming near him.

His own neighbours, however, were so attentive that he couldn't leave his chair, and he realized that they must have been detailed by the organizing committee to entertain him.

When the cabaret was a few minutes off, Andy excused himself and went outside, breathing in the cool quiet of the night air. As always, before a show, he was desperately nervous.

He drew on the stub end of his cigarette, and threw it away. Drifting faintly out from inside the hotel, he could hear the closing chords of the twin girl singers who preceded him. He went through the revolving doors and across the foyer.

Applause came from inside the ballroom. The spotlights were focused, a chord from the orchestra, and Walter Lucas's voice, amplified by the microphone, talking, building him up, ending, "ANDY CHILCOTT!"

The clapping started, though they couldn't see him yet. Andy had ripped off his tie, opened his shirt, unbuttoned his jacket, stuffed his hands in his trousers pockets. He strolled into the spotlights, a morose scowl on his face.

The applause mounted, there were one or two cheers. He hardly heard them. He was all right now, he was in character.

He went into his performance with practised smoothness. This one, the old original, he could do in his sleep. It was a simple sketch of a factory worker spending a day at the seaside with his wife and two children. They'd stood in the train all the way. When they got there, they couldn't find anywhere on the beach to sit. He regarded the sea gloomily, and the sun with suspicion. His only compromise with the great outdoors was to paddle, trouser legs rolled up, with his jacket over his head to shield him from the sun. They bickered over ice-cream, deck chairs, pots of tea, the children, and which train they ought to catch home.

THE audience was a good one, that went without saying. They'd come to be entertained, they'd contributed heavily to charity, and they were determined to enjoy themselves. Even so, reactions were better than Andy had expected. Gradually he began to take liberties, testing their response. They went with him all the way. They laughed when he wanted, they were silent when he willed it. Walter Lucas followed him through the variations, using the instruments for sound effects.

Andy began to experience the sense of power to move an audience that was entirely lacking when he stared into the cold lens of a television camera.

There was dead silence for a few moments after he finished. Then they shouted, they roared, they clapped. Walter Lucas wore a quiet smile, and nodded slightly. Andy did two encores, and the applause was no less. Sweat was streaming down his face, his shirt was wet. Walter said in his ear, "Finish it now, Andy. It's time for the Grand Draw."

He got himself away, and went outside to cool off and tidy his clothes. The after effects of a good performance were rather like those of a drug wearing off. There was first soaring exhilaration, elation and pleasure, which gradually grew smaller, faded, and finally disappeared as he realized that nothing had happened, nothing had changed. His life was still a mess.

He went back into the ballroom. Everyone now had fists full of draw tickets, and were anxiously watching the Mayor as he dipped his hand into

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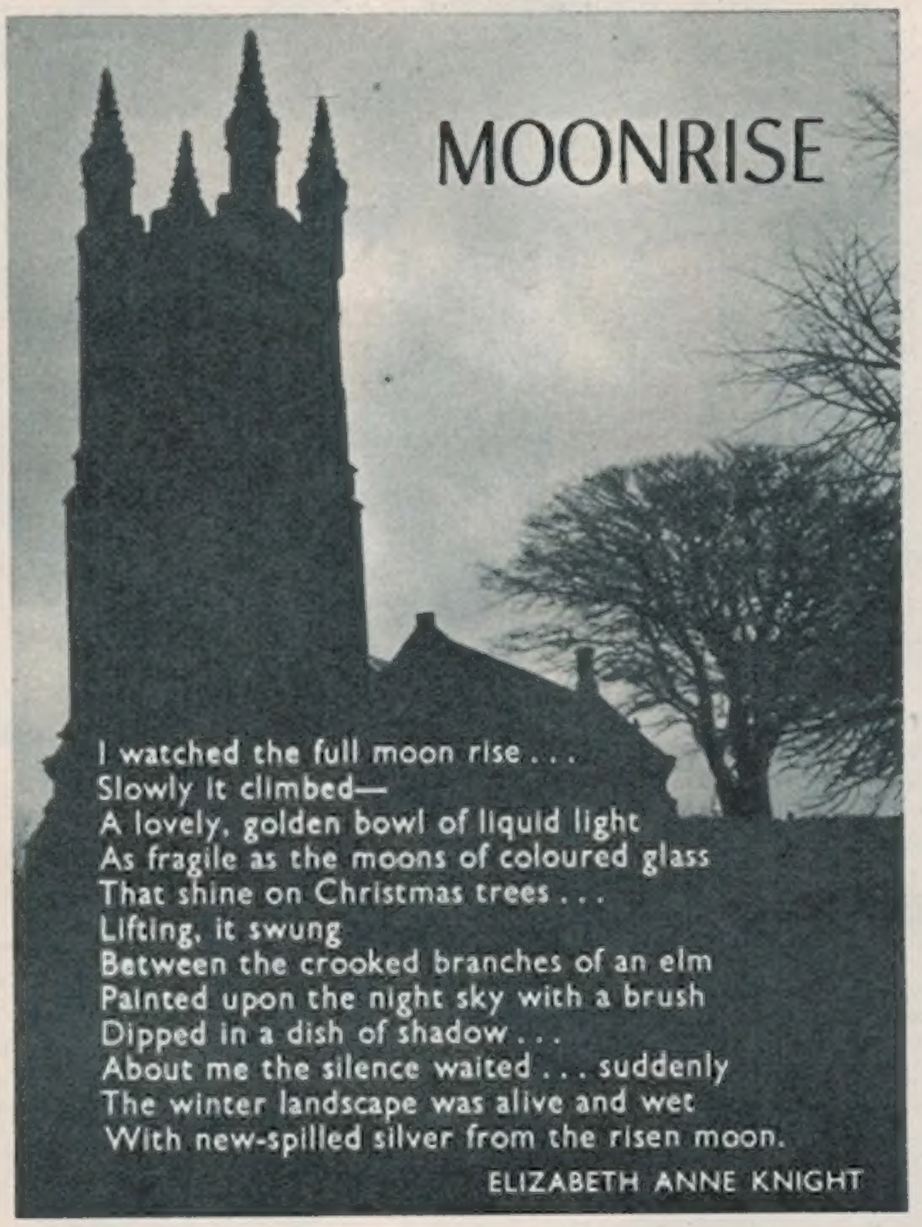
MOONRISE
I watched the full moon rise . . .
Slowly it climbed—
A lovely, golden bowl of liquid light
As fragile as the moons of coloured glass
That shine on Christmas trees . . .
Lifting, it swung
Between the crooked branches of an elm
Painted upon the night sky with a brush
Dipped in a dish of shadow . . .
About me the silence waited . . . suddenly
The winter landscape was alive and wet
With new-spilled silver from the risen moon.
ELIZABETH ANNE KNIGHT

THE GREATEST RAID OF ALL · 2

by C. E. LUCAS PHILLIPS

The six hundred heroes of St. Nazaire

On this proud harbour rested the course of the war. They had to destroy it—whatever the cost

ONLY seventy yards to go. The dockyard of St. Nazaire was an inferno. Flames and the flash of guns at point-blank range; red, green and yellow tracer lit the night sky. Amid the noise, the confusion, the dazzling glare of the searchlights as bewildered Germans fought back at the raiders, sailed the British destroyer Campbeltown, her bows packed with several tons of explosive.

Only sixty yards now.

Soon would come the moment for which the small brave force of just over six hundred men had been training for weeks. Their plan, described as "the sauciest since Drake," was to wreck the giant Normandie Dock, first by ramming the southern caisson, or gate, and then by blowing up the northern gate and power installations.

The dock, that night of March 27-28, 1942, was of vital interest to the course of the war. It was the largest in the world—the only one along the whole western seaboard of Europe large enough to take the mighty new German battleship Tirpitz. Destroy it, and deny it to Tirpitz as a base, and she would not dare venture into the Atlantic to attack Allied convoys.

Fifteen launches—a sixteenth had to turn back with engine trouble—a motor torpedo-boat and a motor gunboat carrying specially trained commandos sailed in two lines astern of the destroyer. More commandos, including demolition teams, were in the destroyer itself, waiting to land on the caisson.

An incendiary bomb, having landed on the bows of the Campbeltown, above the explosive, burned fiercely.

Up in the wheelhouse her captain, Lieutenant-Commander Sam Beattie, tall, black-bearded and calm, and his commando liaison officer, Captain Bob Montgomery, braced themselves ready for the shock of impact.

It was the same throughout the ship. Down in the wardroom, the commandos there sat on the deck. An unexploded shell shot through the steel above them.

A momentary check told them that they had ripped through the anti-torpedo net guarding the caisson; the wire could be felt dragging along the ship's bottom.

Now the caisson was scarcely fifty yards away. Beattie could see it clearly. With extraordinary presence

As Major Bill Copland ordered his men ashore, he had an encouraging word for them. "Just think of this as only another exercise," he said

ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARDS

The greatest raid of all

continued from previous page

of mind, in order to hit the caisson in the centre, he ordered crisply at this last moment: "Port twenty."

Instantly the helmsman obeyed. At 1.34 a.m., with all her Oerlikons blazing at the enemy guns only a few yards away, she crashed into the caisson.

She struck with such accuracy and force that her bows, up to the level of the caisson, crumpled back for a distance of thirty-six feet, leaving her fo'c'sle deck, which was higher than the caisson, actually projecting a foot beyond the inner face.

Beattie turned to Montgomery with a smile and said: "Well, there we are." Looking at his watch, he added: "Four minutes late."

Beattie's achievement, executed with such cool precision, marked the attainment of the chief purpose of the expedition. Now the battle spread like a flame to the whole scene by land and water.

The motor launches, coming up astern of Campbeltown, pressed towards their designated landing places in the great whirlpool of light with the greatest daring, adding to the lurid scene the glow of their own conflagrations and the smoke and stench of burning petrol, as one by one half their number burst into flames or blew up.

Preparing to land

At the moment that Campbeltown crashed into the caisson, the gunboat and two motor launches stood off to support her and the two columns of troop-carrying craft came up close astern. These beheld the bows of the destroyer erupting in flying timbers, smoke and flames. They saw also the commandos leap to their feet on deck and, under a covering fire gallantly sustained from the destroyer's Oerlikons overhead, begin to move forward to disembark for their tasks.

The din was tumultuous as the guns of both sides began to concentrate their fire on this small area.

The ship was still being repeatedly hit and down below, where the engine-room staff were bearing themselves with exemplary courage, shells and explosive bullets were still penetrating.

The first, most imperative duty was to disembark the commandos as rapidly as possible. Not till this had been done did Beattie give the order to abandon ship.

Two of the engine-room men proceeded to scuttle ship by torchlight, opening the valves that would let in the sea and removing the condenser doors. Finally Beattie and Lieutenant C. H. C. Gough, who had controlled the fire of Campbeltown's Oerlikons, went round the ship to make sure that nobody was left behind.

Then they themselves went on to the upper deck while the ship, held fast by the bows on the caisson, was beginning to settle at the stern. About half the ship's company made their way forward to the fo'c'sle, which they found enveloped in the acrid smoke that was pouring from the hole made by the mysterious incendiary. Led by Chief Engine-room Artificer H. Howard, they scrambled down the scaling ladders and, suffering sharp casualties from the heavy machine-gun fire that was riddling the quayside, made their way to Lieutenant D. M. C. Curtis's gunboat in the Old Entrance.

The remainder, numbering about thirty and including Beattie himself, went aft. Beattie, who was concerned at the difficulty of getting his wounded away safely, hailed a motor launch commanded by Lieutenant Mark Rodier, who came alongside on the port quarter and took off Beattie's party.

Full of wounds, silent, empty and deserted by all except her faithful dead, Campbeltown lay patiently on her altar, waiting for the determined hour of sacrifice.

The ship was a cauldron into which light and fire were being poured from all directions as though from hoses. To starboard the German guns were shooting from only a few yards' range.

Illuminated jets of crackling venom streamed through the white searchlights' staring beams. The fo'c'sle was smothered in smoke from the incendiary, which had burned a large hole in the deck, penetrated the chief petty officers' mess and was threatening the great explosive charge immediately below, until a gallant damage-control party of stokers arrested the danger.

Through this pall of smoke, confusing the searchlight glare, Major Bill Copland at once hurried forward to direct the landings from the bows. Having seen that the way was clear to land on the caisson, the naval party began to fix iron-runged ladders over the side. Copland then ran back amidships, through the narrow gangways and into the welldeck, to call forward the assault parties.

His path was choked with wounded sailors and unceremoniously he thrust them aside. Very coolly, Copland ordered: "Roderick off, Roy off."

Attack on the guns

As they came forward they carried up their own bamboo ladders to supplement the ship's ladders, but several of them were smashed, either through enemy fire or by the heavy weights imposed on them. Lieutenant John Roderick, adjured by Lieutenant-Colonel Newman, the military commander, to be off "like lightning" to attack a gun position only a few yards away, was quickly over the side to starboard.

Almost simultaneously, Captain Donald Roy's men were off on the port side, he and Lieutenant Nigel Tibbits—the naval explosive specialist—cursing each other when the steel ladder jammed. Down they all went, carrying or supporting their wounded, then moved off at the double against the targets that they had been dreaming of for so long.

Very calm and unconcerned Copland took post, ordering off each of the parties in turn, with a word of encouragement for each, greeting many of them by name, and adding: "Just think of this as only another exercise."

"He might well," said John Roderick, "have been seeing us off on the local bus for all the concern that he was showing."

When all were off he went in search of Beattie to report all troops disembarked. He found the bridge "a mass of twisted wreckage" and Beattie not there. He went about the ship, calling him by name. Not finding him, he searched the ship for wounded and got them over the side with Howard's party, to make their way to the gunboat. He put a tourniquet on one man's nearly severed leg and, finding it impossible to carry him down the damaged ladders, threw him over the side on to the caisson.

Then, accompanied by Corporal J. F. Cheetham, Lance-Corporal C. Fyfe, his wireless operator, and Private T. G. Hannan, he climbed down himself and made his way into what was now a devil's shooting gallery. . . .

The seven parties of steel-helmeted commandos scattered to their several targets, moving at the double under heavy weights of arms or explosives in the stark dockyard scene. Past buildings they went, railway trucks and piles of timber, now lit by the searchlights, now in a moonlike gloom, sometimes unopposed, sometimes having to fight bitterly for their objectives.

John Roderick was a strapping young Welshman, born at Neath, trained as a bank clerk and commissioned into Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Newman's regiment, the Essex. He was a fine rugger player. At his side was young John Stutchbury, Gordon Highlanders, one of the "babies" of No. 2 Commando, senior in years only to Lieutenant "Tiger" Watson. Twelve n.c.o.s and men made up their little assault force, whose tasks were to destroy the group of four light guns immediately to the south-east of the caisson, to establish a defensive position against counter-attack, and to make an attempt to fire the underground oil fuel tanks.

Roderick's party was quickly away, clambering over the fallen bodies and leaving Lance-Corporal I. Donaldson, a Scotsman with a slow, charming smile, mortally wounded on the deck. Impeded by the broken ladders, several swarmed down to the caisson by rope, Corporals A. F. Woodiwiss and V. W. C. Finch, tommy-gunners, being the first of all the force to set foot on French soil, while their comrades, to cover them, opened fire against the bursts from the enemy positions to their right.

Clearly visible in the artificial light not many yards away there stood their first objective—a light gun in a sandbagged pit. Roderick and his men went straight at it, throwing hand grenades and then rushing in with tommy-guns and Brens blazing. A German grenade was kicked back by Woodiwiss to burst among the enemy, and it was he who clapped the sausage charge on the guns to sever the barrel. All six Germans of the detachment were left for dead.

An early victory

From this first, flashing success Roderick's men swept on to the next objective, which was a 37-mm. gun mounted on top of a formidable concrete bunker. As the only approach up to the gun platform was by a single stairs, they were unable to assault it, but they silenced the gun with grenades skilfully thrown.

On again went the little band to the third gun. This was a Bofors and they found it silent, but Roderick's men, entering the bunker, destroyed the crew. Many Nissen-type huts were here and into these they hurled grenades.

About twenty minutes had gone by. . . .

By now Stutchbury, Sergeant Davies, Corporal A. Howarth and Lance-Corporal H. L. Simpson had been wounded. As a result the effective strength of the party was reduced to ten or less.

By now the Germans had begun to collect themselves. Beyond the gloom Roderick found resistance stiffening, and it was only by great determination that his tiny band held on so long to fulfil their purpose of perimeter protection. Some time after 2.30 a.m. Roderick gave the order to withdraw.

Their way back lay across the caisson, but as Campbeltown's bows projected right across it they had to clamber up

continued on page 34

Lieutenant Stuart Chant (above) led a party of four to smash a pump-house at St. Nazaire. He won the M.C. For leading a commando assault party, Captain Donald Roy (left) was awarded the D.S.O. His men nicknamed him "The Laird"

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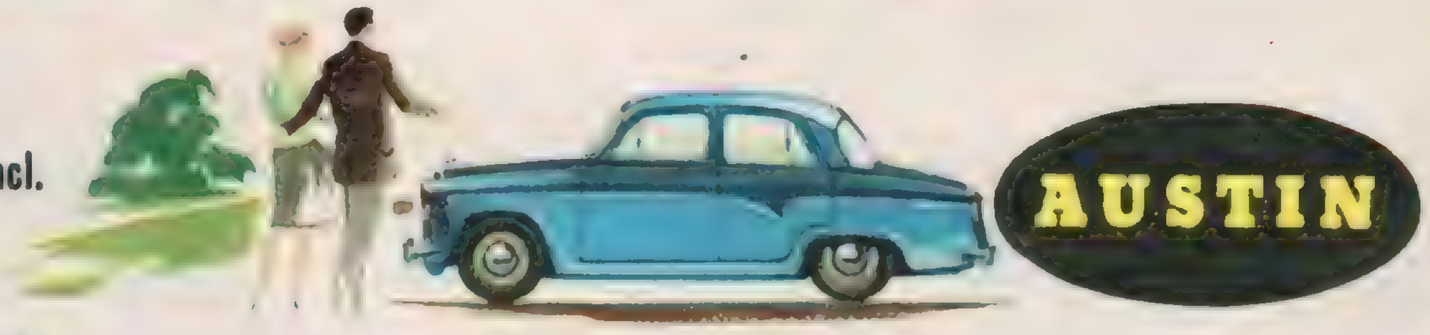

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1 ***Standing on the left leg, grasp the right foot with the right hand and push the right knee sideways, easing the muscles. Repeat with opposite leg***

2 ***Grasp the foot with the left hand and pull, pressing downwards with the right hand just above the ankle. Do this with both ankles***

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

IN the past Yoga has always been regarded as an ancient Hindu practice, associated with Indian seers and mystics. More recently it has been found to have a wider, more up-to-date use.

Modern life in Western countries has become very complex. At the same time the use of the body has become secondary to the exercise of the mind. Few people know how to use their bodies in the most efficient way. The majority never experience the mental relaxation which comes from physical well-being.

It is the same with the mind. People who are searching for lasting happiness find that their hopes of achieving it are constantly being frustrated by the economics of living, and the problems and difficulties which spring from the material side of life.

In these conditions the mind becomes a receptacle for needless fears, worries and insignificant details. There is no time for the type of spiritual contemplation which leads to peace of mind. But a controlled mind is a rare and glorious possession which can be developed into a powerful force, engrossed in the art of living, rather than with the mechanics of life.

Yoga, which is not a religion but a way of life, is designed to develop the unity of mind and body. It is a bridge between the physical and mental processes which enables the practitioner—the *yogi*—to become aware of his inner self, to make full

Bankim Nandi demonstrates Yoga postures which are for experts only

by BANKIM NANDI
PRINCIPAL OF THE YOGA CENTRE

3 *Now sit on the floor. Swing both arms backwards, level with the shoulders, pressing back*

4 *Maintaining spine position, place the left foot on right thigh and rhythmically press the left knee down. Gaze at the tip of your nose, then at wall, and back, not moving head*

use of his intellect and to make himself familiar with the whole of creation, beyond the relative values which are obstructing his progress towards contentment and fulfilment.

On this page I have described further exercises more advanced than those described last week.

Yoga ultimately induces inner meditation. In its earliest stages it can be profitably treated as no more than an effective series of physical exercises. First is a breathing cycle which is designed to clean your nervous system as a preliminary to the more advanced Lotus posture, shown in the last photograph on the page.

Exercise 1 (Breathing): a—Close the left nostril with the left thumb, then take a slow deep breath so that the inhalation is completed while you are counting up to eight seconds mentally. At the same time imagine a strong stimulating current—*prana*—flowing up and over the head and straight down to the base of the spine, to the rhythm of the breath. Imagine the *prana* striking downwards on to this point.

b—Retain the breath in the lungs for four seconds, at the same time in your imagination keeping the *prana* at the base of the spine.

c—Open the left nostril, at the same time closing the right nostril with the fourth finger of the left hand. Exhale to eight counts, at the same time drawing the *prana* right up through the spine from the base, then up, over, and out as before. At the end of this exhalation the abdomen should again be drawn right in.

d—Maintain the indrawn position of the abdomen, keeping all breath out, for two counts.

e—Inhale through the left nostril, but otherwise as in *a*, and repeat the whole cycle twelve times, using each nostril alternately. You should inhale, hold your breath in, exhale, and keep the breath out, using the ratio of 8-4-8-2 seconds.

As progress is made the rhythms can be lengthened and the ratios altered within limits that are comfortable.

There should on no account be any experience of strain, but it is possible with practice to increase up to, say, 12-48-12-12 seconds without discomfort, and for periods up to half an hour.

THE END

5 *Raise the thigh by flexing the knee, while the opposite foot is still resting on it. At the same time keep your left knee firmly on the floor*

6 *This is the full Lotus posture. By means of this cycle of exercises the yogi achieves the full unity of body and mind necessary for good health*

HOUR OF DARKNESS

by THURMAN WARRINER

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

As he closed the farm gate and squelched through the slush to the waiting car, Sheila opened the offside door and moved over. "You take her back, Jim," she said. "I hate driving, anyway."

It was a slow, lumbering progress down the rutted track and through a maze of dark steep lanes to the main road. When they came to the Woodman Inn, Jim Forrest stopped. "Out of tobacco," he said. "Coming in?"

"May as well. You'll be ages." Sheila slipped out of the car and walked beside him. "They'll want all the news."

And they did. It took three drinks and a quarter of an hour to explain where he had been and why.

"Trouble is," he finished, "they send for a vet around here and tell him what's wrong."

"Then stand over you and criticize," the landlord said, and a laugh went round the bar.

JIM FORREST, a big, comfortable-looking man, lit his pipe and raised an eyebrow. "You could say that."

"Old Santley going to lose his cow?"

"That's what I think. But he's been poking behind a beam in the stable and found a bottle of something his grandfather made up around the turn of the century. Maybe he'll pull her through in spite of me."

"Should have tried the bottle before he landed you with a ten-mile trip on a dirty night, Jim."

Forrest shook his head sadly. "They never do that." He caught Sheila's eye. She was smiling in her cool, friendly way, but he knew she wanted to be off. He nodded and put down his glass. "Good night, boys."

"Good night, Jim . . . 'night, Sheila."

She tucked her hand under his arm as they walked out to the car, an old station-wagon well suited to the field tracks and waterlogged lanes in this part of the country. The wind was keen and blustery. A half-moon rode the scudding clouds, and a spatter of cold rain patterned the windscreen as Forrest pressed the starter.

"You shouldn't have bothered," he said, "on a filthy night like this."

"You had to bother, Jim."

"Line of duty," he grinned, wrestling with the noisy gearbox. "Soon as I get home, the phone'll ring again. Bad as being a midwife . . . did I tell you, Sheila, what old Santley said——"

The sentence snapped like a broken string as he felt a slight, menacing pressure between his shoulder-blades and heard the voice. A light, pleasant voice, casual and quiet.

"Now don't get excited. Keep on driving, that's all. You won't get hurt as long as you keep driving."

The thing was so much like a dream, a not very amusing dream, that Forrest did precisely as he was told. He kept on driving, and the pressure relaxed. But he heard a little gasp from Sheila.

"You take it easy, too," the voice said. "It's on the cards that the gentleman might get ideas about taking a risk. But the risk isn't just personal now. It includes you. If he starts anything, *you'll* get it first. And he wouldn't like that, would he?"

Familiar road. Meaker's farm gate there. The Stoodley village by-pass. Jim Forrest blinked rapidly from left to right, trying to re-orient himself. *The fellow must have got into the car while we were at the pub.*

"Who are you?" he asked, his voice surprisingly steady. "What do you want?"

"A little taxi-service. You're going to take me to Croxwell Point."

"You're crazy. That's fifteen miles from here."

"Sixteen. I don't like walking."

Forrest was driving at a steady twenty. In spite of the cold, he could feel sweat on his forehead.

HE knew Croxwell Point, knew it well. The main Bridgeham road cut across the base of the headland at nearly a thousand feet. There'd be fog up there now. Branching away from that road was a network of narrow lanes, criss-crossing the Point itself and leading to a dozen lonely coves and beaches below.

"Whereabouts on the Point do you want to be?" he asked steadily.

"I'll tell you that when we get there."

"You won't get there, my friend."

"Just keep on driving."

"That won't help you. Tank's nearly dry. You can check if you like to bend over."

He wouldn't do that. . . . But till he was sure, Forrest had several bad moments.

"Fill up at the next garage."

Forrest took a deep, long breath. He had his wits about him now. He was thinking straight again.

"I know the proprietor. He's a personal friend of mine. It's going to be a risk for you."

"Not all that big. Not with my gun where it is. Ask the lady to tell you where my gun is."

"Two dead people in a car aren't going to help you," Forrest said. "Best thing you can do is hop out while you're safe."

"Keep driving," the voice said, quite calmly and pleasantly.

Should have locked the door, of course . . . be a lesson to me, this. Always lock up, even if you're only going to be a couple of minutes.

"Don't let him frighten you," Forrest

There was a gun in Sheila's back as Jim drove down the road that led to death. His only weapon now was the friendship of a lifetime

told Sheila. "Few men are capable of shooting a woman deliberately."

"I am," the voice said. "Quite capable. I'd do it for pastime."

"I'm not really frightened," Sheila said. "I suppose that's because I don't quite believe it."

It was a lonely, thinly populated district. Odd to think that he was only three miles from home. Just on the edge of the town. But they wouldn't be going that way. Not if the man in charge knew his route.

Headlights dancing between high beech hedges . . . only five minutes since we left the pub. Pipe still going well. Stoat or something sidling across the road there. Should be able to think of something. Should be some trick, some ruse to beat a man with a gun. . . .

"Where's this garage?"

"Half a mile on."

"Get filled up. Y[illegible]e enough cash?"

"I have an ac[illegible]."

That wasn't t[illegible] It was the first move in his own game. He always paid Squaddy Turner cash. If he told Squaddy to book it, he'd suspect something was wrong. There'd be other ways, too, of conveying to Squaddy that something was wrong.

"Don't try any funny business. I've got ears. Sharp ears. Try to act smart and she'll get it. Don't think I'm bluffing. She'll get it."

Other ways. . . . Jim Forrest had never been a man to panic. You can think your way out of most things. He knew, now, what he was going to do.

MIGHT not come off. But there was a chance. It was Sheila who mattered. Had to be husband and father and brother to Sheila now. Had to do something.

Haze of light down the road. Three pumps under a canopy. Repair shop beyond, little showroom with a neon strip over the top. White-coated figure strolling towards the pumps. Squaddy! Good old Squaddy. . . . He glanced at Sheila again. Her face was tense and expressionless, like a profile cut in cardboard.

"Tell the gentleman where the gun is," the voice softly commanded.

"I wouldn't know much about anatomy," Sheila said. "But it's just under my right shoulder-blade, Jim, if that conveys anything to you."

The sweat runnelled from Forrest's forehead to his nose. He let down the window, and Squaddy Turner's noble moustache lifted in a smile above his square mouth.

"Lousy night, Jim," he said.

"Not so good. Fill her up, Squaddy."

"Fill her up?" he repeated. "Oh, sure! Yes, okay."

"I'm in a hurry, Squaddy. Got another trip. I'll give you a ring later."

"Sure, sure!" Squaddy took a doubtful step towards the pumps, then glanced over his shoulder. "Look, what's wrong with you? What's wrong with the both of you?"

"Nothing's wrong." Forrest wondered if he was getting it over, or if Squaddy would make some characteristically hasty move that would send them all over the edge. "I'm in a hell of a hurry, that's all."

Squaddy nodded and reached for the hose. Forrest waited, eyes on the arcing wipers. "Book it," he said, when Squaddy's head reappeared.

"Book it? Oh, sure! Look here, Jim. . . ."

"See you later," Forrest said curtly.

"Where are you going?"

"Another damned call."

"What about Sheila?"

"She's going with me."

"Okay!" Squaddy said blankly. "Cheer-ho, then."

Forrest wound up the window and pulled on to the road, glancing left and right. "I hope that performance satisfied you?" he said.

"She's alive." The voice had a sardonic note. "She wouldn't have been if you'd tried to start something." A light chuckle. "So her name's Sheila, eh? Nice name . . . Sheila and Jim! Married, or just drifting that way? You can call me Alf. Keeps it matey." He peered between them. "Next turn to the right. Don't want to go through town, do we?"

FORREST shook the salty moisture out of his eyes. He had to play for time.

Left, then right again. . . . He had got his second wind now. He was piecing things together.

"I believe I know who you are," he said.

"Don't get ideas!" Soft, almost friendly, that voice close behind.

"I could be wrong . . . but the Southern Counties bank in town had its strong-room blown last night. Thirty-six thousand pounds, they say."

"That's a lot of money."

"And the caretaker was killed."

"What d'you know? Some men, they'll do anything for an easy life."

"There were two men. And they found an abandoned car. A car stolen in London last week. It had a faulty pump. That must have put you in a spot."

"You're good at working things out."

"I suppose your partner went off for another car while you went to ground with the loot. You wouldn't dare move while it was daylight. Not with a bulging suitcase—maybe two."

"I'm sitting on 'em now," the voice said affably.

Forrest's eyes, straining into the mirror, had picked out two faint points of light far away to the rear. Another

Hour of darkness

continued from previous page

car was following, and not many cars used this road so late.

"I don't quite understand about the Point," he said in conversational tones. "Unless . . . yes, of course! Your friend couldn't come into town and pick you up. Much too dangerous. So you arranged a rendezvous there. But it left you with the problem of transport. So you chose this way."

"I didn't. It's not my idea, sixteen miles with a gun stuck in a woman's ribs. Can't even light a fag. If you'd stayed a couple of minutes longer in the pub I'd have been clear with the car."

The lights of the other car were nearer. Definitely nearer now. The man in the back couldn't have seen them. And the premature exultation of that knowledge caused Forrest to make his abysmal mistake.

"It was unlucky for you as well as for us that we came back and disturbed you," he said. "It's difficult to get away with murder, you know. I can't see you. But I've a good memory for voices."

"Six miles now. Step on it."

"I've heard yours before. It was in the Stanhope Arms, late last night. Less than a hundred yards from the bank. It asked for a pint of mixed. It belonged to a sandy little man with a round bald patch and a small rounded nose. You'd have been waiting for zero hour."

There was a long, long silence. Those dancing lights in the mirror were steadily gaining, but Forrest scarcely noticed them. Even before the voice spoke again, even while he was listening to the hard, harsh breathing just behind his left ear, he realized his mistake.

"You shouldn't have said that, mister. Because I'll have to make sure you never say it to anybody else, see? Either of you."

FORREST puffed slowly at the big pipe. Curious to think that the match he'd used to light it was in the brass tray on the bar-counter . . . a thousand years ago. Sheila's head slowly turned. He couldn't see her eyes. Thank God for that. He had to *think*. Think straight.

"There's a car coming up." The voice was stony now. "Let him pass."

Forrest slowed. So did the other car.

"He doesn't want to pass. What do you want me to do—stop?"

"Step on it."

Sheila's fingers were on his arm. Their pressure was steady and warm. *There must be something. But what? Take a chance . . . yes, but you can't do that when the chance isn't your own.*

The other car was dropping behind. Squaddy only had the hack taxi. He'd drive it with reckless fury, but even so, it would never keep up with them.

"Keep your foot down."

They were on a twisting, upward incline. Forrest drove the car hard. Just over the top, they came to the fork of a stony lane leading precipitously towards the sea.

"Down there! Lights off! All of 'em . . . *off*!"

Forrest pushed in the switches. And seconds later the other car roared past the end of the lane.

"Now straight on. Wing lights."

Forrest obeyed. *Stall, stall . . . find something that'll win a minute, two minutes. The choke. . . .*

CAUTIOUSLY he moved his hand forward. Squaddy would be haring along the top road now. But that road was straight. He'd be able to see a mile ahead. And when he missed their rear lights, he'd come back.

The voice came again. "What's wrong with this damned engine?"

"Do you want me to get out and see?"

"Left again, next fork. I'm happy anywhere around here. If you hadn't been so smart, this is where I'd have been wishing you a pleasant good evening . . . don't miss that next fork."

Squaddy, hunched over the wheel, would be back on the scent by now. Forrest didn't quite know what Squaddy could do against a man with a gun, even if he caught up with them. But Squaddy was the sort of man who could usually think up something. He had to stall till Squaddy got here.

His eyes stung, as if salt or sand were grating under the lids. He lifted his fingers to rub them, then peered again at the mirror. "Keep your hands on that wheel," the voice warned.

"You know something?" he said over his shoulder. "If you pull that trigger, it will be the last thing you ever do."

"Don't worry about me. Just keep driving."

"There'll be a split second. You can't shoot us both with one bullet. You daren't shoot me first. You wouldn't shift me over and get behind the wheel before the car went over the edge."

No answer to that. Forrest licked his lips.

The car bumped and rocked down the steep gradient. Like a clock pendulum, Forrest's eyes swivelled from the road ahead to the mirror, and back to the road again. He slowed for the hairpin bend. The voice from the back was still steady.

"You've got a lot of nerve. I'm the same way. You play a good game, but I'm holding the high cards . . . this is where you go left."

"It leads nowhere."

"It leads to a lot of nice picnic places on the cliff top. When you get round the corner, shove her in neutral."

Forrest felt, rather than saw, that the man had moved farther back. There came a shock of cold air as the rear door opened. Something heavy fell out. They had jettisoned their cargo.

He measured with his eye the distance to the low wall. If he swerved now. . . .

Then he saw the lights again.

His foot eased on the pedal. *Jam the car into the bank, hit the wall, crash the gears . . . or wait?* He was reaching down to the gear-lever when Sheila's high voice checked him.

"Jim, he's got the starting-handle." She turned in the seat. "I know what you're going to do. That's why you've left the door open."

Forrest glanced sideways just long enough to see the wide-eyed horror on her face. "Jim, stop the car. Take a chance on whether he shoots. He's going to knock you out when we come to the cliff road. He can jump clear."

"Perhaps you could, too."

"I wouldn't want to do that."

"Keep driving," the voice said. "You make me tired!"

"I'm driving. But I'll give you a tip. Before you use that starting-handle or the gun, take a look behind."

The following car chose that moment to flood the lane with its headlights.

"It's the man from the garage," Forrest said. "You can't win now. Whatever you do with us, he'll get you. I used to fly with him. You'll never shake him off. Nobody ever did."

"You're bluffing," the voice said in a deadly monotone.

"It's the man from the garage."

SWEAT had clamped Forrest's collar like a tight wet band around his neck. The road blurred. *Must be like this when you're driving drunk. Except that when you're driving drunk, they say, you think you're good. Like ten men.* Forrest didn't feel good. All he could think of was keeping the car steady in that swimming road and keeping his voice steady, too.

"He's coming up fast. You'll never shake him off. I'll give you a sporting chance. I'll slow down and you can jump for it."

He risked a swift glance over his shoulder and saw the man for the first time. He was silhouetted, crouched against the open rear door. A sharp blast of sound reverberated through the metal body. Again and again came the roar of the gun. Those lights, blindingly reflected in the mirror, jumped skyward as the pursuing car violently swerved. But it came on again. Fifty, forty, thirty yards behind. The gun roared a fourth time. "Got him!" said the voice.

But it was only one of those glaring lights. Squaddy was still there. A spot flung a long shadow from Forrest's car, far in front.

Tip him out . . . run on to the verge and tip him out.

But he didn't have to do that. Corners can get too tight even for a gunman.

"He's jumped!" Sheila cried. "Oh, thank God he isn't here any more!"

Forrest slammed on his brakes, and the other car stopped just behind. Squaddy was still wearing his white coat. "What goes on?" he shouted loudly. "Who's the boy with the gun?"

"Tell you later . . . where did he go?"

"Dived into the bushes. What did he throw out for ballast way back? Couple of bags rolled into the ditch."

"Thirty-six thousand pounds, I fancy," Forrest said, easing himself from behind the wheel.

"*Wh-a-a-t?* Then let's get after him."

"He still has the gun. Did you see anything of another car?"

"There's one parked on the main road."

"He'll have doubled back to collect the bags. Listen . . . sounds like a car coming down."

"And nary an inch to turn round!" Squaddy said furiously. "Shove your wagon out of the way, Jim. I've more lock on mine."

"You'll put her over the bank."

"Then I'll put her over the bank."

Forrest watched while Squaddy eased the old taxi back and forward, back and forward. . . . "Made it!" Squaddy shouted, and they tumbled in.

HALF a mile back and they saw it, the car that had waited for Forrest's passenger. With that passenger and another man beside it.

"He'll shoot again," Forrest said.

But he didn't. They heaved the suitcases in, jumped after them, and the car began to move. It picked up speed quickly enough, but Squaddy was already travelling fast. He hit the other car on the off-side, a crunching angry blow. It seemed a long time before it left the road and tipped sideways into the ditch.

Forrest blundered out. He leaned against the side of the taxi, thinking, stupidly, about old Santley's cow, and watching Squaddy finish the job.

One man climbed out through the shattered door and promptly collapsed on the grass. The other, now without his gun, made a grab for Squaddy's legs, but Squaddy's fist felled him and he was unceremoniously dragged to the taxi.

"Little fellow like this, causing so much trouble!" said Squaddy. "Inside with you! I'll get the other character."

"And the bags," Forrest reminded him. . . .

They were nearly in town before the little man spoke, in his soft, friendly voice. He said: "If I hadn't lost the gun when you tipped us over, you'd all have been dead by now."

"Just goes to show!" Squaddy said heartily. "Don't feel sore, though. You just picked the wrong car and the wrong people. I'd like to know how the hell it all started?"

"It started," Sheila said, "when I saw Jim waiting for a bus. His car had broken down, so I drove him out to Santley's. Coming back, we called at the Woodman. This man got in then."

WITH a chuckle, Squaddy swung down the main street towards the police station.

"Yeh, you picked the wrong car! Brother, I might have missed the old May Day Jim was giving me with his left eye. But when my pal rolls up to my garage in my wagon with my wife, and tells me to fill up a half-full tank and book it though he always pays on the nail, and then says he's taking my wife on another late-night trip—well, brother, what would you do? Now, now . . . take it easy! You'll know better next time."

He chuckled again as Forrest jumped out and hurried up the police station steps. "Except that there isn't going to be any next time. Oh no, brother, not for you!"

THE END

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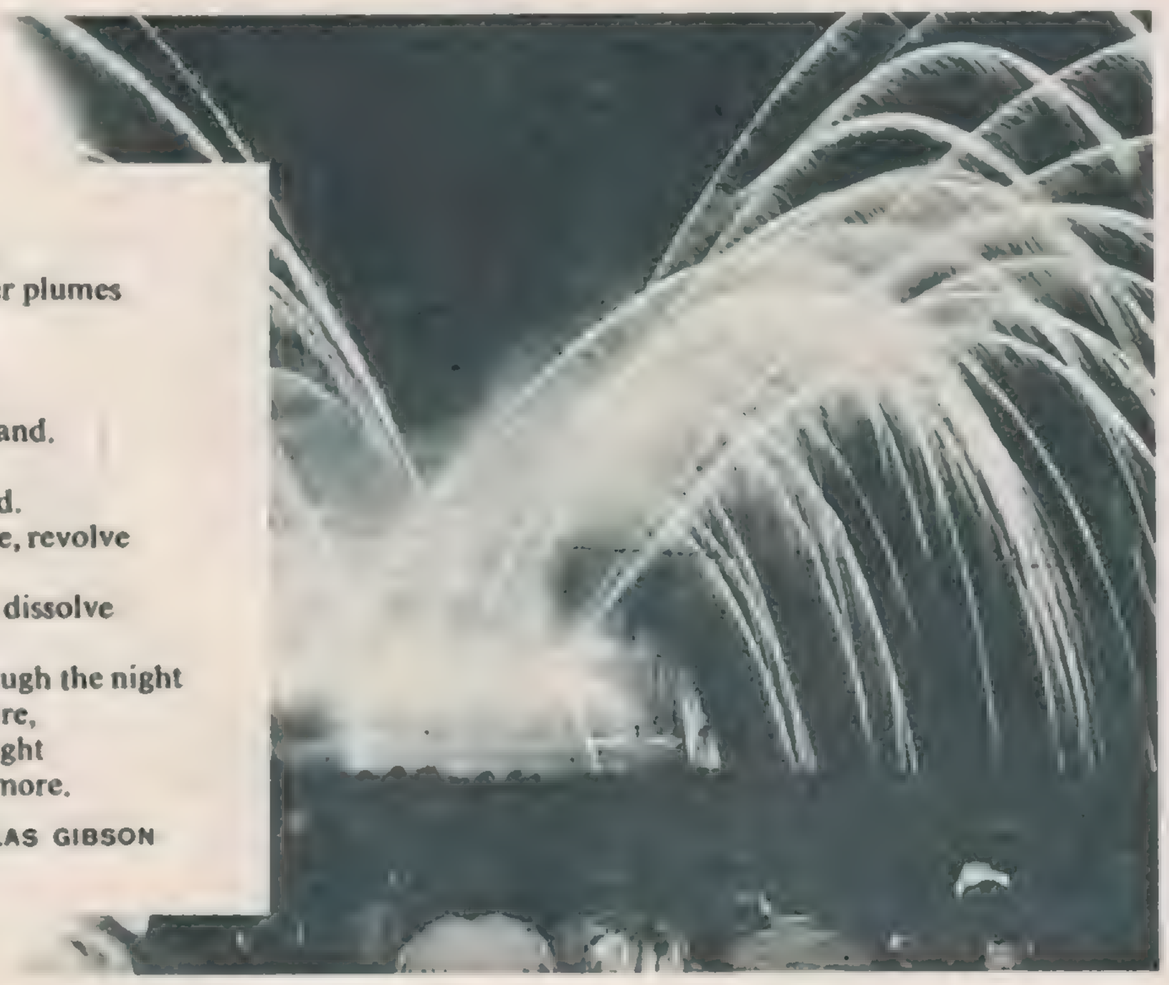
FESTIVAL FIREWORKS



The rockets soar into the night
The coloured stars through silver plumes
Fall to a rustle of delight;
And now a waterfall illumes
Excited faces, watching where
In darkness moves a burning brand.
A fountain flares into the air
Like magic from an unseen hand.
Giant catherine wheels catch fire, revolve
In splendour, birds of paradise
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And streaming homewards through the night
That never seemed so dark before,
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Of shooting stars that shine no more.

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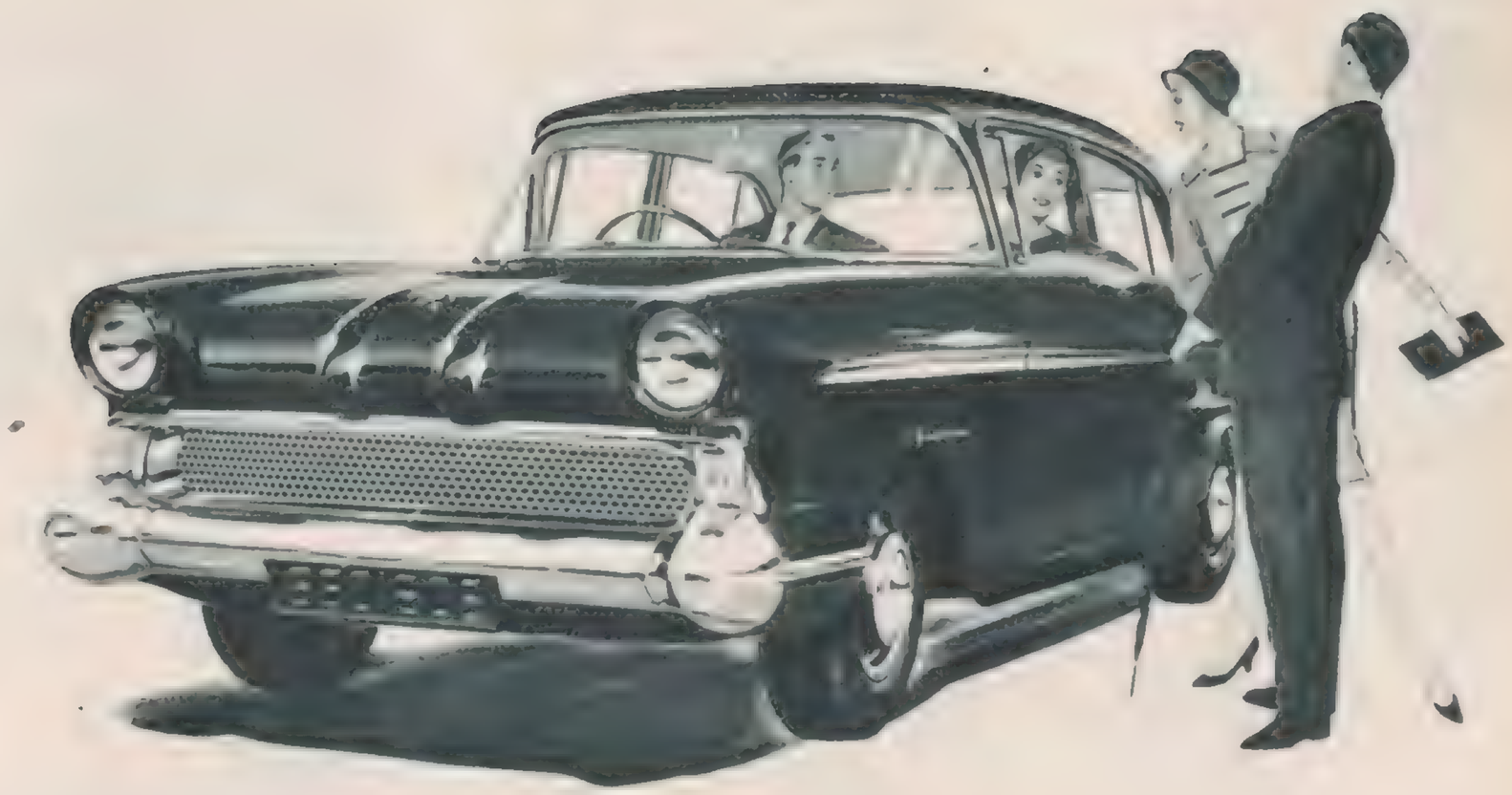

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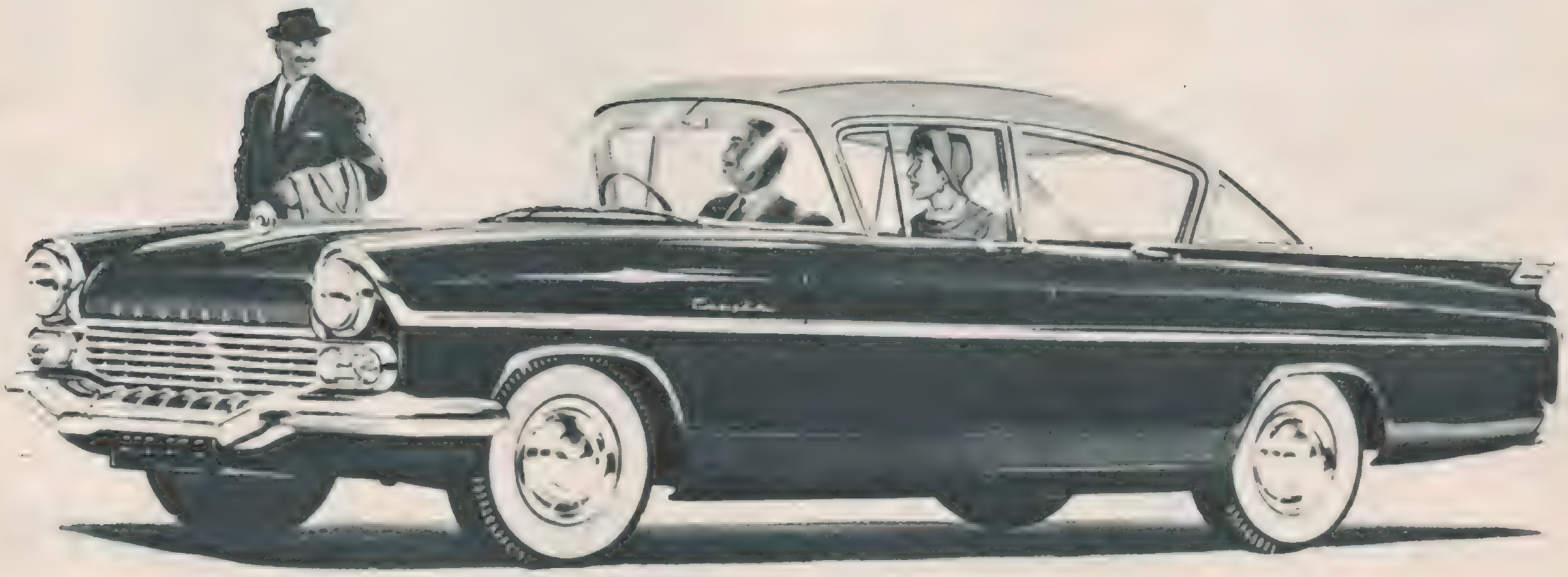

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Billy Wallace is back as society's number one escort—and he still hasn't found the perfect partner

THE BOY FRIEND

AT a London dinner party, Billy Wallace was asked to partner a pretty, unmarried girl. After the meal the guests went on to a dance and, soon after their arrival, the hostess was chagrined to see Billy's partner with someone else. Annoyed that he should be neglecting what seemed to be his duty, she buttonholed him as soon as she could. "What happened?" she demanded. "Why aren't you dancing with . . . ?"

He explained that they had bored each other.

Boredom is the dirtiest word in the Wallace etymology. He is here, there and everywhere—at least everywhere that offers fun, soft lights and sweet music and the sort of people whose activities fill the gossip columns. His name has been linked with Princess Margaret's so often, and over so long a period, that the link itself is in danger of becoming a bore. But the rest of Billy Wallace's life is an almost continual flight from the word.

Constant companion

His closest friendship, quite unlike any of his other attachments, is with Judy Montagu. Plain, fascinating, vivacious and always amusing, Judy Montagu, like Wallace, is a foundation stone of the Princess Margaret set.

He telephones her several times a day wherever he may be. He sees her every day when they are both in London. He consults her about everything—his engagements, his household arrangements, his plans, even what suit he should wear.

Together, they frequently plan weekend house parties, usually at the home of their mutual friend Lord Wilton. The guests are their closest friends. They are all young, and they are all gay. Most of them have a sincere belief in their own importance.

"It is quite impossible to stay with them for a weekend without emerging a nervous wreck," said a friend who attended one of their parties. Asked why, he said it was difficult to explain. "I think it's because there is always tension in the air, a kind of excitement and simulated gaiety which is almost hysterical."

The analysis was harsh, but just. Billy Wallace is a phenomenon of the fitful fifties. Far less loquacious than the sweatered, sandalled and unshaven Angry Young Men, the Romantic Young Men are also a symptom of a world that went wrong when the last shot was fired in August, 1945. Wallace is by far the best example of these inherently sad young romanticists, who try to find an escape from a world which wants to debunk.

"Billy is, I believe, frightened of being serious," says one girl who has known him for a long time. "I was dancing with him one evening and I said: 'Come to dinner tomorrow night. Edward is coming and we can have a serious conversation for a change.' Billy answered: 'Serious? I don't ever want to be serious. I only want to laugh and be gay.' "

He has the rare quality in a man of being a decorative extra rather than the leading character. Women love him for it, because he can be a charming and distinguished escort and yet not detract from their own place in the limelight.

Men, however, too often judge him on his appearance. "Any young chap who looks like that must be a fool," growled an elderly member of his club, and added: "Can't think what the Princess—who has got some brains—sees in him."

His face is so English that it is almost a caricature of racial and class traits. He is black-haired, and always looks as though he had just hastily dampened his locks to avoid a romantic but inappropriate Bohemianism.

He is as pale as men of gentle and artistic nature are supposed to be. His hands are surprisingly firm but beautifully expressive. He can talk with them.

His leap into the limelight occurred when he met Princess Margaret in 1947. His great friend, "Sonny"—the Marquess of Blandford—presented him to the young Princess and the friendship immediately became a close one. It has continued without a break.

He was a guest at Princess Margaret's twenty-first birthday party at Balmoral, and every year since then he has been invited to stay in Scotland for a few days, often going out for a day's shooting with the Duke of Edinburgh.

In January last year, while at Sandringham, he asked Princess Margaret to help him with the choice of furniture for his new home—a pleasant little Georgian house (four bedrooms, two reception rooms) in South Street, Mayfair.

Party at the Ritz

Wallace himself has described Princess Margaret as "the most attractive girl I have ever met." But he resents any suggestion that he has tried to turn the Princess into a playgirl to match his playboy rôle. "I don't see why everyone believes that I spend my life blowing up balloons for parties," he once complained.

If the belief is unfairly held, Wallace is largely to blame. Soon after he met the Princess his twenty-first birthday was celebrated with a lavish and expensive party in the Garden Room of the Ritz Hotel. Princess Margaret was, of course, the chief guest.

His much-ballyhooed production of *The Frog* in 1954 gained him extravagant publicity, because the Princess attended most rehearsals and was, in

continued on page 48

Wallace's name has been linked with many beautiful women. Among them were Sharman Douglas (above), Kay Kendall, Anne Parker, Barbara Lyon

Princess Margaret with Wallace at a Hallow-e'en party to raise money for orphans. He says she is the most attractive girl he has ever met

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This makes my pink face turn purple

says GILBERT HARDING

I've seen it for myself—men hated and humiliated because of the colour of their skin. Now the shame they heaped on Paul Robeson has made me boil again

I ONCE heard a story (I believe Aneurin Bevan delights in telling it) about a Welshman, let us call him Dai Jones, who went to heaven and found it even more wonderful than he had expected. Millions of sopranos. Millions of contraltos. Billions of tenors, of course. Just one tremendous choir. But only one bass—Dai Jones.

When Dai arrived, they were just starting the "Hallelujah" chorus and Dai naturally opened his chest to it. The heavenly choir had, however, sung only a few lines when the conducting archangel tapped with his stick. "Champion!" he said. "But, if you please, Dai Jones, *just* a little less bass!"

Aneurin Bevan must have been reminded of Dai Jones when, in August, he went to the Welsh National Eisteddfod with Paul Robeson.

Citizen of the world

Characteristically, Robeson modestly took a place in the third row as the opening hymn, "Praise the Lord," was sung. He, too, opened his splendid shoulders, and I am told that his superb bass voice enriched, sustained, the whole.

What a noble citizen of the world Paul Robeson is!

He is a man "made out of the original stuff of the world," as Alexander Woollcott, the American critic, so well said. And he added, as I should be proud to add: "I am proud of belonging to his race. For, of course, we both are members of the race sometimes fulsomely described as 'human'."

There is praise in plenty for Robeson as a singer; his critics deplore the protesting politician.

Does Paul Robeson protest too much?

I certainly do not think so. He is a Negro. He is an American. His opinions, political and social, stem from one overriding conviction, the conviction that the American Negro (one man in ten of that country's teeming population) should have equal rights with the other nine-tenths, both in law and in fact, *now*.

Robeson has fought, and suffered deeply, for the only cause that I believe I could find the courage and energy to fight for, the cause of human dignity.

He tells, but he is not fond of telling, what happened to him at university when he tried to get into the football team. The other boys didn't want a Negro in the side, so they kicked and hit him.

But Robeson remembered his father telling him that he was the representative of a lot of other Negro boys who wanted to play football and wanted to go to college.

"I had to show I could take whatever was handed out," says Robeson. And he did.

Paul Robeson has had plenty handed out to him since, but he has had the strength to meet it. His strength seems almost racial; he is never on his own. Behind him, always, are millions of his long-suffering people.

Paul Robeson at this year's Eisteddfod with Aneurin Bevan. We need Robeson in Britain now, says Harding

I have seen for myself how the American Negro suffers. During my sojourn in Canada, towards the end of the war, I visited the United States, and in the city (they call any town a "city") of Birmingham, Alabama, I saw a remarkable thing.

German prisoners-of-war were being taken to the station, possibly to be repatriated. They were white enemies and they were escorted by black American troops. When this sorry little procession stopped for refreshment at a wayside café the enemy could be served with coffee but not their escorts.

It made me furious

What utter madness! I was so infuriated by all I saw that, in protest, I sat in that part of the tramcars marked "Coloured" and announced, when the conductor protested, that I was coloured—coloured white or, rather, a somewhat horrible shade of pink.

I went purple when I saw how the Negroes were treated at the railway stations.

There were, of course, two ticket-windows, one for "Coloured" and one for "Whites." The ticket-clerks would not attend to the Negroes until all the whites had been served. Many fine people, with ebony, patient faces, were kept waiting quite deliberately until they had missed their trains. If they had dared to protest, they would have been classed as "uppitty" and heaven knows what violence or indignity would have been heaped upon them.

These memories, and my old indignation at "man's inhumanity to man," have come crowding back to me because I have recently been reading Paul Robeson's own account of his life, *Here I Stand*, and another book about him, *Paul Robeson*.

Mr. Robeson very kindly sent these books to me himself. I hope I do not flatter myself in thinking that this was because, ever since I could command attention in any way, I have expressed my deepest loathing for the belief that, because a man's skin is of a different colour, his nose of a different shape or size, for that alone he is worse, or better, than the next chap.

I am distressed by the events at Little Rock, but I am not half so much distressed by them as by the sudden upsurge of violence and hatred against coloured people in this country.

This is no past event, already forgotten if not forgiven; it was, and still is, a symptom of a deplorable state of heart which it makes me miserable to think can exist in our kindly land.

"I shall never forget arriving at Southampton," Paul Robeson could say of a day long ago, in 1922. "The people were so kind. I thought I had never seen any land so beautiful, green and companionable. I longed to fling myself flat upon my face and hug the cool earth."

Today, happily, Robeson himself still gets a warm welcome when he comes to our shores. We and the coloured people here he calls "his people" need him badly in our midst at this time, when a coloured immigrant is more likely to fling himself upon his face to avoid a brickbat hurled by some lout.

Of course, there is no easy solution to this problem.

I once invited a high-caste Indian, a Brahmin, to lunch; I had not the slightest idea how grand he was. I also asked another Indian, equally ignorant that, in India, he was classed as an "untouchable." My more humble but much more amusing friend arrived first. When the Brahmin arrived he declared that it was quite impossible for them to sit at the same table.

They were both brown; they were both men. I despaired of ever solving the problem of man's inhumanity to man.

At Cambridge I once lunched with Duleepsinhji, the Indian cricketer, and some drunks at the next table began to mutter: "Chuck the nigger out!" Duleep said to the apologetic manager: "I lunched last week with the King and Queen. If those bores behave, I do not mind them staying."

Blame the bunglers

I grant that it might be better for all concerned if we did decide to exercise more control over the number and kind of immigrants coming in to this country; the cry to "chuck the nigger out" might not, then, be so often heard.

Of course, just and righteous anger is felt in Nottingham, Notting Hill and many other towns over horrible and inadequate housing and crowding that would try the temper of saints.

Vent that anger, most certainly, upon the local council or whoever is really to blame, but don't chuck a brick at some poor black.

He is where he is, competing for house space, only because wages and conditions in his own land are so vile that he has been compelled to come to our sunless shores.

Remember, as Paul Robeson has so often sung:

> "For man in white skin never can be free
> While his black brother is in slavery."

Let us have compassion. I am sure the so-called "colour problem" can never be solved by arguments, only by better feelings. That goes for all intolerance shown either to Jew or Negro.

Let's have a bit more Christmas kindness all the year round.

I need not remind you that Christmas celebrates the birth of a Jewish baby and that one of the kings who came to Jesus, bearing gifts, was said to be black.

THE END

NOW SOMEBODY MUST RIDE

GIBSON'S LEG

Teach him a lesson

INTO THE NIGHT WITH A GUN. BUT WAS BROKEN . . . AND THAT LEFT A WOMAN AND A BOY

by EDWARD LINDALL

ILLUSTRATED BY OLIVER BRABBINS

It was the end of day, and the watering, which had started at noon, was done. The camp was slowing down. There was no more bawling of thirsty cattle; the dust of their hooves had settled, and the red hills on the far horizon, catching the dying sun, reared up like fires from the grey expanse of plain.

Matt Gibson stood by the wagon, legs astride, savouring the pleasantness of tired muscles and the thought that here, at Bore 26, the drove was half over. Another four hundred miles and he would be settling into his new station homestead of Bulowie Springs.

A smile tugged at his mouth. Then it died as Billy Andrews came trudging from the horselines, carrying his heavy stock saddle like a veteran, swaggering like one. Billy was nine years old.

"D'you know what?" Billy said. He squinted up at Gibson with an attempt at nonchalance, betrayed by blue eyes sparkling with excitement. The freckles across his nose seemed to dance.

"No." Gibson said.

"There's been natives following us all day," Billy said. "They're out there now . . . in that gully."

"I know," Gibson said.

The boy put down his saddle. "Let's get out the guns," he said eagerly. "We could go out and drive them off before they set an ambush."

"What guns?" Gibson asked.

"You know . . . in that box," Billy said impatiently. "In the wagon. The rifle's just the right weight for me. I got it out this morning."

Gibson watched the boy intently for a moment, with eyes so sun-bleached they seemed almost colourless in the mahogany setting of his face. Billy was getting out of hand. It was a pity, because it could be the spoiling of a fine boy.

Then he looked away, knowing the value of making impatience wait, and sent his eyes roving to check, unnecessarily, the activity of his camp.

Beyond the bore, five hundred yards away, two native stockmen were riding an umbrella patrol to keep the herd close up, ready for the next day's start. Down-wind, by a grove of desert oaks, twelve hobbled camels formed an exclusive little colony, ten of them pack animals, two harness-broken for the wagon. Beyond them Charlie Big Toe, the head stockman, was playing nursemaid to the riding horses.

Close at hand, almost against Gibson's shoulder, was the utility wagon. It was a big, battered vehicle, a tarpaulin-covered repository for all the things that were awkward for the pack camels of his droving outfit. Among its cargo were an old .303 Lee Enfield bolt-action rifle and an automatic shotgun for when they got into brush-turkey country farther south.

Gibson carried a .32 pistol in a webbing holster on his hip against any sudden need. He hitched it now, unconsciously. "You leave those guns alone, Billy," he said harshly. "I've told you before. I'm the only one who handles them."

"But you can't fight the natives off by yourself," the boy said emphatically.

"I'm not fighting anybody off," Gibson said. "And neither are you."

Billy danced a jig of frustration. "But you just can't leave them alone. They're like Injuns. I've read all about Injuns. You have to get in first or they'll ambush you."

Gibson shook his head slowly, wondering just what he should do. Billy Andrews was small for a nine-year-old, thin, with the wiry strength of most thin boys. He was a reader of books and a dreamer of dreams. A clever, intense boy; a likeable boy. In the three weeks since he and his mother had joined the droving party, Gibson had seen the growth of his independence, and had quietly approved it. But now this talk of fighting, this handling of the guns against strict orders, called for some cutting down to size.

Yet Gibson was unwilling to punish the boy in any way. That was too close to a father's rôle. And he hadn't made provision for a woman in his life; certainly not for a widow and her son.

"Billy," he said quietly. "Listen to me and listen hard. This is important. I'm not playing games." He waved a broad, calloused hand towards the cattle, foraging contentedly on the short, tough grasses of the plain. "I've got to get those cattle to Bulowie Springs. It's a big job, with only myself and five native stockmen. I can't afford any trouble, Billy. Understand?"

"I'm only trying to help," the boy said earnestly, his thin face screwed up with sincerity.

"The stockmen won't be any good against raiders, so it's just you and me."

"Billy," Gibson said flatly, "those natives aren't raiders. They're a score or so of half-starved myalls, poor miserable, naked black men. . . . They're hanging around to pick up our leavings after each camp." He put a hand on the boy's shoulders. "You know that, Billy. You're only playing think games."

The boy's face clouded, and it seemed to Gibson that even his straw hair drooped a little. He watched Billy trudge off towards the lines where Charlie Big Toe trudged among the horses, his broad black face shining with good humour above his lurid shirt.

Charlie was a good head stockman, squat, bow-legged, powerful, and with the gentlest hands on a horse that Gibson had ever seen. Gibson wondered, as he watched the boy, if Charlie Big Toe seemed to Billy a dangerous spy, a fifth columnist planted in the wagon train, ready to blow smoke signals to the lurking killers.

He laughed quietly to himself, then shrugged and heaved himself away from the wagon. He walked round it, pacing stiffly on his high-heeled riding boots, towards an outcrop of rocks where Margaret Andrews was kneading dough. She was kneeling on the hard brown sun-baked ground, pounding the beginnings of their evening meal in a big tin dish.

Margaret was blonde, with deep blue eyes, swept-back hair, and graceful strength. Her cheekbones were high, her brow wide, and the line of her face swept softly down to a firm chin. Her mouth was firm too, but not close-lipped. It was firm for the same reason that the eyes were steady. There had been much to face in the past few years, and little to laugh about.

She had needed all her courage when Gibson had found her three weeks before, sitting with Billy in the shade of their broken down old lorry, with one small canteen of water between them and the circling carrion birds.

She had taken a job as housekeeper on a north-west cattle station, and had thought to reach it by her own unaided efforts. She was a city girl. She had sought the job because she hoped that the harsh outback country might purge the boy's memory, and her own, of his father's illness and death.

Now she was going back to Bulowie Springs, and thence . . . well, that was her affair. Gibson had agreed to take her to Bulowie and on to the nearest town, the wood-and-iron shanty sprawl of Hergott Crossing. The mailman drove through there once a month, and Margaret and Billy Andrews could get a ride with him to wherever they wanted to go.

"Margaret," Gibson said bluntly. "I want you to give Billy a good talking to. He's been handling my guns. He wants to shoot up some myalls out there behind us."

She looked up gravely, but there was a gleam of something that might have been amusement in her eyes. "What d'you suggest I should do?"

"Teach him a lesson," Gibson said tersely. "He's getting out of hand."

"I'm afraid you're right," she said. "I'll have to think of something." She stood up. "You know," she said. "Nothing I could do would be nearly as effective as the slightest thing from you. He idolizes you. If you were to take away his riding horse for a few days, say. . . ."

Gibson looked past her and fixed his attention on the distant hills that now glowed softly purple in the failing light. Only their tips were red. He was almost painfully conscious of this woman . . . of the delicacy of her features, the soft firmness of the arms, the sweep of her body. . . .

"I've talked to him," he said flatly. "I've told him to leave the guns alone. That's as far as I can go." He looked at her, and the smile was still there in the clear depths of her eyes. It bothered him. "Discipline, training, is your affair," he said harshly. "He's your son. I don't want to interfere."

"I know," she said quietly. "I understand."

She moved away then, towards the cooking fire. Gibson whirled and marched away, feeling awkward and somehow ashamed, for he had caught the inner meaning of her words. She knew. She understood how he felt.

That night he slept badly. For the first time in years the ground was hard beneath his body, and once, when he opened his eyes in half-sleep, the bright, high stars seemed to be glaring at him.

He couldn't understand it. Everything had gone the way he wanted. Margaret had read the riot act to Billy. Billy was a chastened little boy. But now, with the moon sliding down the far side of the sky, Matt Gibson's sleep was plagued with uneasiness. Margaret Andrews's face, gravely smiling, advanced and retreated in his mind like a desert mirage—and a small, nagging voice began bleating "coward."

Something in the voice really irritated him. He swung a big right-handed punch at it, and a sudden agony jerked him wide awake. He had hit the ground.

He sat up, hugging the fist beneath his left armpit, cursing with a quiet intensity. Then he stiffened, turning to face a strange noise coming from the direction of the herd, and realizing almost instinctively it was this that had been nagging through his sleep.

He could see the herd as a black mass on the plain, etched against the moonlight, formless and without detail. There was no undue noise from the animals, but he could sense an undercurrent of uneasiness running through them.

He could no longer hear the noise that had awakened him, but that was unimportant. The important thing was to get out there and soothe that uneasiness in the beasts before it grew into hysteria. A stampede, even on this flat ground, would cause injuries and delay as well as loss of hard-won and carefully husbanded condition.

He got up swiftly, pulled on his clothes, and went quickly to the horselines. Charlie Big Toe was there before him, in the act of riding out. Gibson slapped a bridle on Dugong, his favourite mount, a wiry bay gelding, then slipped on, bare-back. There was no time for saddling.

"What's wrong with 'em, Charlie?" he asked tersely.

"Dunno," Charlie Big Toe grunted. "Mebbe dat fella myalls."

Gibson's face went hard. Billy's warning flashed across his mind. It was possible that the myalls had become desperate with hunger and were sniffing around for fresh meat. His right hand checked the pistol at his hip.

They rode at a brisk trot towards the herd, now six to seven hundred yards away from the camp. Half-way there, Gibson could feel the tension. The animals were moving and, on the far side, some had started bellowing. He wondered, savagely, what the devil the night herdsmen were doing. He was about to say as much to Charlie Big Toe when a rider came tearing down on them, yelling in a high, strident voice; yelling the one word, "Myalls."

Then everything cut loose. A wild screeching split the air. The cattle started bawling. There was an upsurge, a sudden boiling over everywhere. In

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Teach him a lesson

continued from previous page

seconds the entire herd was stampeding.

Gibson wheeled Dugong and started for them. Charlie Big Toe dodged around him and rode out ahead. Then Gibson was racing alongside the bobbing horns, riding with slack reins, leaving the running to Dugong while he watched Charlie Big Toe, waiting for him to start the turning movement that would bring the herd to a milling halt.

So he didn't see the big boulder that Dugong hit. All he knew was the jarring, smashing shock of impact. He was sprawling on the ground, with the stampede streaming past, the thunder of it filling his ears. He dragged himself round to the lee side of the boulder for protection, grinding his teeth against a searing pain in his right leg. Then he passed out.

He came back to consciousness in the wagon. His leg ached abominably, but his head was softly pillowed, and when he opened his eyes he looked up into Margaret Andrews's face. It was indistinct, shadowed on one side, lighted on the other by the glow of a lantern placed somewhere near his feet.

There was anxiety and compassion in her expression, a softness that thrilled him, and deep within him a new warmth moved to meet it. But then he forced himself back to the old world of practicality.

"How's Dugong?" he asked.

"Ashamed," she said. "But all right."

"The herd?"

"Ask Charlie. He's here. He carried you in."

Gibson lifted his head and saw Charlie Big Toe squatting by the lantern, throwing a monstrous backdrop of shadow on the canvas roof.

"Cattle orright, boss," Charlie Big Toe said. "Dem fella myall spear one cow, cut 'im up and run away. They proper bad."

"Blast them," Gibson said.

"I told you we should've gone for them," Billy said. "I told you if they got hungry enough. . . ."

"Be quiet," Margaret Andrews ordered sharply.

Gibson turned his eyes. The boy was sitting next to him, on a flour sack, hugging his knees. A feverish excitement glittered in his eyes, making his face seem even thinner. "Gee," he whispered, "a real stampede."

Matt Gibson groaned. "How's my leg?"

"Broken," Margaret Andrews said quietly. "I've set it and splinted it as best I could, but you won't be walking for some time." Then she added: "Nor riding, unless I'm much mistaken."

"You're much mistaken," Gibson grunted. He levered himself to his elbows, setting his jaw against the pain. His face was dirty grey. "I must get out and teach those myalls a lesson. . . . Chase them about, spray some shots close enough to scare the hell out of 'em. If I don't they'll get cock-a-hoop, and then anything could happen."

"Let me go," Margaret Andrews said. "If it's that important. . . ."

Matt Gibson was startled. He looked at her for a moment, seeing in her eyes a flickering of fear that was not showing on her face. It emphasized for him the courage, and the worth, of her offer. "Thanks, but no," he said. "It's my job." He turned to Charlie Big Toe. "Charlie, take a rifle and shoot a steer. Bring me enough hide for this leg first thing in the morning."

Charlie's teeth gleamed in the lantern light. "Orright, boss." He got out the old Lee Enfield and dropped to the ground. His face appeared for an instant at the opening. "I shoot 'im now, quicktime."

When he had gone, Gibson looked quizzically at Margaret Andrews and at Billy, who was staring at him.

"The idea," he said, "in case you're puzzled, is to strap the greenhide around the leg, then sit out in the sun. It's an old bushman's trick. It dries out like a plaster cast. You can't walk much, but you can ride."

"How long?" Margaret Andrews asked.

Gibson frowned. "Maybe late tomorrow. Maybe the next day. It depends on the sun, and the condition of the hide."

"I thought they needed to be taught their lesson soon," she said. "Two days isn't soon."

"You're right," Gibson said, his face grim. "But it's the best I can manage. If I went out and couldn't go on with it, they'd see weakness instead of strength, and strength is the only thing they respect."

"Then let me go," she said quickly. "Charlie Big Toe could go with me. We could leave at dawn. I can shoot . . . well, enough to scare them, anyway."

Gibson put a hand on her arm, thanking her with a pressure of his fingers. "No," he said. "It's still my job. Charlie's a fine stockman, but no fighter. You're too inexperienced. Herd 'em too close, and you'd probably get a spear in your ribs." He paused. "If anyone has to finish like that, it should be me."

They heard the report of the Lee Enfield as Charlie Big Toe killed the steer, and then they settled down to sleep the few hours left of darkness.

There was no need for sentries, because Gibson knew that the myalls, gorged with fresh meat, would be lying dead to the world between their sleeping fires, stirring only to replenish them from the piles of sticks each man kept beside him. They would probably have shifted camp a bit up the gully where they'd hidden in the afternoon, but they would have taken no other precautions against a counter-attack.

But Gibson didn't sleep at first. His splinted leg ached savagely, and there was too much in his mind. He cursed the leg bitterly, not for its pain but for its impediment. The time to strike the myalls was in the pre-dawn, while they were still drowsy and heavy with distended bellies. Hit them then and scatter them before they began to think the white man was too scared to defend his cattle. . . .

Then he made himself stop thinking about such things, because there was no profit in it. Instead he switched his thoughts to Margaret's offer to go out in his place, to run his risks; frightened, but still prepared to go. There was a deal of comfort in having somebody else caring, too. He dozed off.

Gibson snapped awake to the flat, whipcrack sound of shots. One . . . two . . . three of them . . . then a fourth; spaced out raggedly, the way they'd be by somebody using a bolt action rifle without much skill.

He cursed violently. That damned fool Charlie Big Toe had taken the Lee Enfield and was trying to win a one-man war.

He swung his legs round, and dragged himself to the wagon opening. The broken leg hurt clamorously inside its cumbrous splints, but he ignored it. His jaw, his face and eyes, his whole body was taut with urgency. He tried to pierce the greyness of the dawn, but could see nothing except the lumpiness of spinifex and the hillock outline of a hobbled camel snuffling over something on the ground.

Then he heard another shot. . . . He had to get a horse.

"Billy," he roared. "Billy. . . ."

It was Charlie Big Toe who came running. His eyes were big with fright. His mouth was open, but slack; the white teeth no longer gleamed.

Gibson stared. "Charlie . . . what the hell?" He stopped, and suddenly a cold fear stabbed him. "Charlie. Who's out there?"

"Boss, I don't do nuthin'," Charlie gasped.

Gibson grabbed him by the shirt and dragged him in against the wagon side. "Billy?" His voice cut like a knife.

"Yair." Charlie Big Toe nodded

continued on page 47

It took me an hour and a quarter to assemble and fix a Cascade shower over the bath in our new home. The shower arrives in a kit, ready for assembly, and costs £3 15s. 0d. It needs no special plumbing. The spray is fed through a rubber pipe fitted with twin tap connectors which form a hot-and-cold mixer. The connectors are quickly slipped on to the taps when the shower is needed. Curtains, hooks and rings are plastic; frame and shower in non-rust metals. You can order the outfit direct from the makers: John Sydney Ltd., Rochelle Works, Brixton Hill Place, London, S.W.2. One tip—wet the bottom of the curtain outside before using the shower; then it will stick to the sides of the bath and give you more room for manoeuvre.

Be proud of your

BATHROOM

The room in which you spend the most soothing hours of your life should be as comfortable as you can make it

If ever I build another house I shall ruin myself over the bathroom. It is the one spot where I could easily go gadget-mad. There would be the temptation to install a huge, hand-made Elysian bath, with a built-in thermometer and a pop-up waste, costing a mere £200. Then there would be gleaming shower cabinets with important levers, mixer taps, sprays, nozzles, racks, patent soap dishes and yards of hot-towel rails.

The Hollywood bathroom is a dream, but I am doing my best with the bathroom which fate and the builder have provided. Like most family bathrooms, ours is liable to develop a queue at rush hours. To speed things up and make our hot water supply go farther I have just installed the fix-it-yourself shower which you see in the picture on the left. This is designed to fit over the bath. For the minimum flat or house with an overworked bathroom there are self-contained, non-splash shower cabinets which can be installed in any room where water supply and drainaway pipes can be connected. One of these, in the do-it-yourself class, is the Dolphin plastic shower cubicle which comes in four easily assembled sections and costs £45. Connecting up is a job for the plumber.

Another space-saver for the minimum bathroom is the Tubbie bath which has an overall measurement of 26 in. by 37 in., with a deep end for your legs and a shallow end in which you sit. This is useful if you are dividing up an old house and want a bathroom in a cupboard-sized space or an extra bathroom in a crowded house.

We are at last catching up with other countries in our ideas about bathroom equipment. Because more of us are travelling on the Continent, the bidet, as well as the shower, is beginning to appear in British bathrooms. A bidet unit may cost £10 or more, plus installation charges; but I have just seen a plastic Bidette, designed for use in bathrooms in which there is a w.c. set, costing only 30s. The Bidette is made in a range of pleasant colours, is filled under the tap, fits over the lavatory pan for use and has a plug outlet.

A practical bathroom device for a household with old people or invalids is the Economic bath safety rail—a handlebar with rubber grips which lies across the bath, firmly anchored to the bath taps, and can be folded back when not in use. As a further precaution against the risk of slipping there is the Redfern non-slip bath mat fitted with rubber suckers which cling firmly to the bottom of the bath.

To get full satisfaction from your bathroom some form of heating is essential. A combination radiator and heated towel rail which can add a touch of luxury to your life is the new oil-filled electric Towelrad with 9 ft. of drying and airing space and a ½-kW. radiator for extra warmth. Fitting this in accordance with safety regulations is a job for your electrician.

You will find the names and addresses of firms supplying the products mentioned here at the foot of column three on page 2 of this supplement.

What is wrong with this bathroom?

This is the bathroom nobody loves. Below are listed ten of its faults. How many more can you spot?

1. Shelf above the basin for banging the head against. 2. Plug-in portable radiator for producing electric shocks. 3. Inadequate shaving mirror. 4. No towel rails. 5. Out-of-date glaring ceiling light. 6. No mirror light. 7. Bath not boxed in, creating dust traps. 8. Cold and hideous tiled floor. 9. Gloomy imitation stained glass in window. 10. No place for oddments, clothes, ashtrays.

Give your bathroom

A SPLASH OF COLOUR

A cheerful towel corner is made in this alcove, backed with wallpaper with a spiky fish design. There's plenty of room for the family's towels, and a different colour for everyone. An oil-filled electric radiator beneath will ensure that towels keep aired in the winter

ALL-WHITE bathrooms are a thing of the past. We have all got tired of their bleak cleanliness. The new bathrooms are made friendlier and more comforting with carpets, wallpapers, plants, tiles, bright curtains, coloured towels and electrical warming devices.

It's easy to have a bright bathroom if you are starting from scratch. Baths and basins in cheerful colours cost only a little more than those in white. There is no need to have all the fittings matching. Choose a blue bath and a yellow basin, and you can plan your decorations to blend with both. Or have an ordinary white bath and have a fling with Goslett's new decorated porcelain "Swan line" basin with an underglaze design of flowers, sea-shells or fish, which cannot wear off. It is a beautiful object with a lighthearted Victorian flavour.

But few people start from scratch. In a new house the bathroom has usually been fitted up before you come on to the scene. But you can still make small changes like adding gay coloured plastic taps to white fittings. These cost only 8s. each, in red, green, blue or yellow.

Steamproof decorations

Decorations are entirely in your hands. Modern paints and wallpaper treatments have minimized the steam problem to such an extent that you can decorate your bathroom in almost the same way as any other room.

Crown Wallpapers make a range of steamproof "washable" papers especially for use in the bathroom. These papers may be wiped over with a damp cloth, but should *not* be scrubbed with detergents or scrubbing brushes. Their chief quality is their steam-resistance and ability to stand up to continuous damp conditions. Many wallpaper shops will treat ordinary wallpaper to make it suitable for bathroom use. This process costs about 10s. a roll, which sounds a lot, but you need very little in bathrooms.

You can also treat wallpaper for yourself with steamproof emulsions. One is called "Loyalty Glaze," which costs 31s. 6d. a gallon and produces a very highly glossy surface, or you can use an emulsion thinner, price 14s. 6d., for a duller egg-shell finish. Poor-quality papers will not take this processing, nor will embossed papers. If in doubt, test a small piece first.

Don't use shiny gloss paint for bathroom walls. You will find that the steam condenses and runs down leaving ugly marks. Use a matt paint; better still, prepare the walls with Seculate anti-condensation compound. This gives a slightly textured surface and can be finished in a choice of pleasant colours.

Glass and Tiles

Tiles add the luxury touch and do-it-yourself plastic tiles have halved the cost of tiling. You can use them as dados, as complete wall coverings or as a protective finish to wall areas liable to specially hard wear. Below you see several splashback ideas of this kind using a variety of plastics and do-it-yourself mosaics.

Mirror glass is a beautiful decorative material for bathrooms. A large wall-panel, placed to reflect the light, can make a small bathroom look much bigger and more luxurious. Mirror glass is fairly expensive, but once fixed it lasts for ever. An occasional wipe over with a demisting cloth, made for car windscreens, will keep it clear. A glass shelf in front of a mirror panel, with pretty bottles, or a huge jar or decanter

Make yourself a splashba

(Above) Plysu pre-patterned plastic mosaic tiles in bronze are used for a splash-back to a yellow basin. These are easy to fix, are made in combinations of blue, cream, green, red, black, bronze and white, or plain colours. They are supplied in 12-in. squares, containing 256 tiles, for 6s. 6d. a square, or six sheets with spreader, 39s., enough for a splashback for a bath. Fixing instructions, Supplement page four

(Left) Dark green do-it-yourself mosaic from Italy, boxes in bath decoratively, on a basis of hardboard panelling. The variegated pink mosaic on the wall also comes from Italy, and is made of glass. In many colours and qualities, from Dennis M. Williams, 43 Thames Street, Kingston, Surrey. Towel by Horrockses. Vogue bath by Allied Ironfounders

These red and black "Simplex" tiles are made of flexible plastic which becomes rigid and firm when fixed. The backs are covered with adhesive, so they are trouble-free to fix. Their shiny surface is easy to clean with a damp cloth. Simplex tiles are 6 in. by 6 in. and are available in many colours. They cost 12s. a dozen; matching beading strips, 36 in. by 1 in., also 12s. a dozen, from ironmongers. Fixing instructions, Supplement page four

filled with bright bathsalts or soap tablets makes a happy decoration.

Bathroom fabrics

Textured plastic, realistically like cretonne, is sold in many new designs, and will give you long service as curtains. Venetian blinds in bright colours (with plastic tapes for cleaning) are practical, too. You can buy cottons and linens printed with fish and shell designs, and vivid terry-towelling by the yard. I would rather have good curtains to draw at night than obscured window glass, which looks gloomy in the day time.

Towels and bathmats are now very gay, and you could make a feature of your towels by hanging them against a rich-patterned wallpaper like the one illustrated on this page. Another idea—hang them in big brass or chromium rings against the wall. If you do this, have a low oil-filled electric radiator fitted below to keep the towels aired.

Hard floorcoverings are generally considered most suitable for bathrooms, and linoleum and plastic tiles are easy to lay yourself and come in many good bright colours. But carpet need not be an extravagance which rots in a few months. Rubber-backed needleloom carpet made of synthetic fibres is unaffected by the damp. Or you can cover old linoleum with several shaggy Tumbeltwist rugs sewn together to cover a large area. These are made of cotton in very good colours, dry quickly and are quite cheap (21s. 9d. for a mat 15 in. by 30 in.).

Plants like it, too

If you are an indoor gardener you will know that many of those luscious-looking jungly plants flourish in a steamy atmosphere. A plant or two in a corner or hanging from the ceiling adds life and interest to a plain room. Most kinds of ivy grow well in bathrooms and look extremely decorative trailing down a wall or round a window.

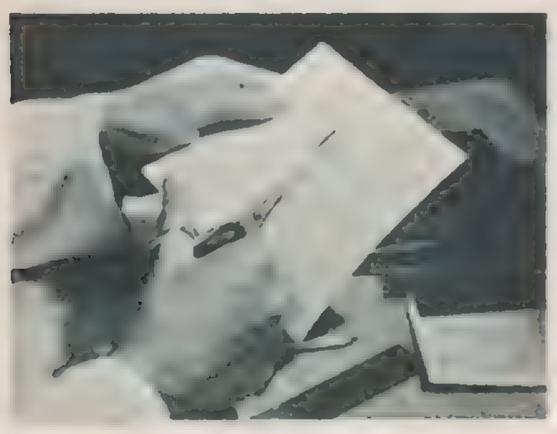
In her own bathroom, Mrs. Vining, a professional decorator, has chosen blue wallpaper with a red, yellow and white fish design to set the note for the rest of her colour scheme. Red and white glazed cotton curtains, canary yellow Tumbeltwist rug and red and black Osman towels complement black and white fittings

ack

A small piece of Formica laminated plastic makes an effective splash-back. A standard size panel 3 ft. by 2 ft. would be the right size for a basin and costs 30s. Equally effective would be one of the self-adhesive plastic films like Contact or Fablon. These are 18 in. wide, cost 1s. 9d. a yard each, in many designs and colours, from most ironmongers. All basins in these pictures are from Froys, Hammersmith

t—pages two and three

Fixing the Splashbacks



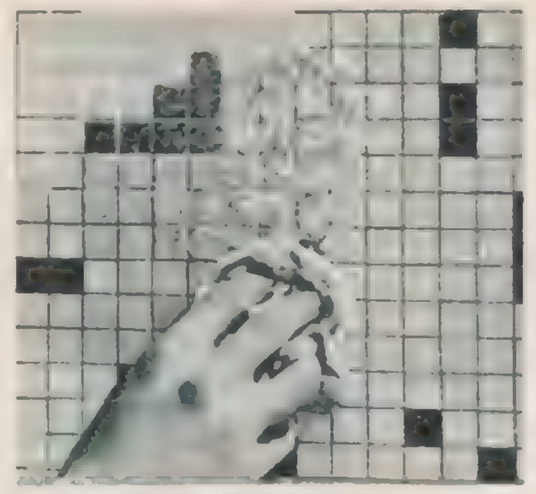
SIMPLEX PLASTIC TILES

Simplex plastic tiles need no preparation before fixing. Clean the wall to which they are to be applied, and draw a horizontal line along the top of the area to be covered. Peel the paper from the back of the tile, and lay it in position on the wall, taking care to position it correctly the first time. Once pressed in place, the tiles are difficult to remove, and impossible to slide into position. The edges of the tiles are butted together, and are easily cut to fit into or round corners with a pair of scissors.

These tiles will adhere to most surfaces, such as painted walls, woodwork, metal, glass or old ceramic tiles, primed plaster walls, or the glazed side of hardboard, but not to distemper, or flaking paint. Such loose surfaces should be thoroughly rubbed down, and smoothed with sandpaper. Any wallpaper must be stripped.

Simplex tiles can be kept clean and shining by rubbing over occasionally with a cloth damped in a solution of detergent water. This will prevent them from attracting dust.

Laying the Plysu mosaic sheet.



Grouting the tiles with cellulose filler.

MOSAIC TILES

The Dennis Williams mosaic tiles used on the bath panel and wall on Supplement page two are supplied in paper faced sheets, glazed 1 ft. square, and unglazed 2 ft. square.

The surface to which mosaic is to be applied must be thoroughly cleaned. Distemper or emulsion paint should be removed entirely.

Draw a horizontal line along the top of the area to be covered. Using a spreader, spread the adhesive about ¼ in. thick, and press the sheets of tiles to it, paper side outward. Tylofast is recommended and is available with the tiles. After a few hours, wash off the paper facing, adjust any mosaic that may have been applied crooked, and leave for 24 hours to dry.

Polyfilla is a good plaster for grouting (filling the spaces between the mosaic). Apply the filler with a flat piece of rubber, or a cloth, working it well into all gaps. Wipe the surface clean and leave for 24 hours to dry. Traces of plaster still on the surface of unglazed mosaic can be cleaned off with a stiff paste made from white sawdust, and spirit of salt. Massage the paste well into the face of the tiles, and then wash off with water. Wear protective gloves when handling the paste. Glazed tiles can be washed over with plain water.

Plastic Plysu mosaic tiles, shown in the splashback on Supplement page two, are supplied in 1-ft. squares, backed with gauze, and are applied in a similar manner. Plysu Mastic adhesive is available with the tiles. After applying, leave for twelve hours before grouting with Polyfilla. Clean off excess filler with a squeezed out sponge, going over the joints so as to leave them filled to just below the surface of the tiles. Next day, give them a wipe over with a cloth soaked in liquid detergent, and a final polish with a dry duster.

BE PROUD OF YOUR BATHROOM

Further details of the products mentioned on Supplement page one can be obtained from: *Dolphin shower cubicle:* Reinforced Plastic Developments, 14-15 Coleman Street, London E.C.2. *Tubbie bath:* Allied Ironfounders, Ltd., 28 Brook Street, London, W.1. *Bidette:* John Bell & Croyden, 50 Wigmore Street, London, W.1 (postage extra 2s. 6d.). *Economic safety rail:* Charles Winn & Co., Ltd., Granville Street, Birmingham, 1. *Redfern non-slip mat:* A. W. Gamage, Ltd., Holborn, London, E.C.1. *Towelrad:* (£13 19s. 10d.) Hurseal, Ltd., 229 Regent Street, London, W.1.

KEEP THIS

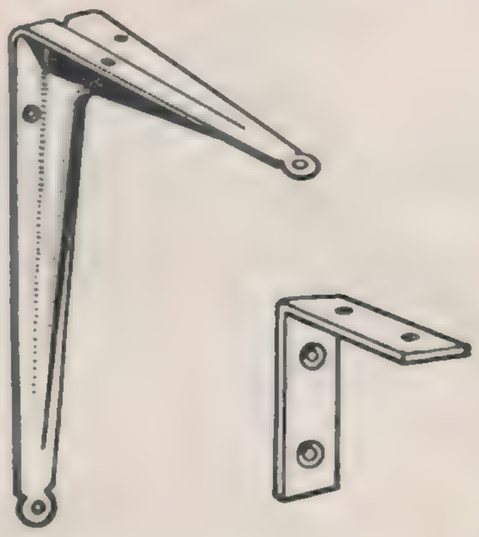
Here is another guide for handymen devised by Roger Smithells to help you pick the right tools and materials for jobs around the house

Handyman Guide 6

STRENGTHEN THE JOB

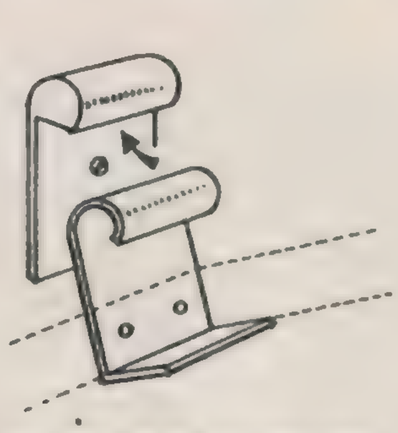
CORNER PLATE — REPAIR PLATE — TEE PLATE

These metal plates are ready drilled and countersunk for screws. Useful for reinforcing old woodwork joints, which are coming adrift—the corners of window frames for example—and for strengthening butt joints in new woodwork. The straight repair plate can be used as a "splint" to support a cracked or weak member. They can all be fixed to the surface, but look much neater and make a considerably stronger joint when recessed into the wood.



ANGLE BRACKETS

Available in many sizes, painted, galvanized or plain metal. Chiefly used for fixing shelves, table tops, etc., to walls. Also useful for strengthening right-angle joints, repairing loose table legs and furniture frames.



OZNEL SHELF COUPLING

A shelf bracket in two interlocking parts. One part is screwed to the wall, the other to the back of the shelf. To hang the shelf, slip the shelf plate into the wall plate, which grips it securely. The shelf is easily removed for cleaning or redecorating. No unscrewing is required. It is quickly replaced. A supporting arm is available for shelves over 7 in. wide.

WORTH NOTING

● Good news for cold tenants of furnished houses comes in the form of the Redfyre 60 portable continuous burning fire, which needs no fixing. This can bring any unused fireplace into use again, without any expensive adaptation. You simply stand the Redfyre in the recess and light a fire. It is suitable for any solid fuel, has its own ashpan, deepening bar and operating tool. In black, light cream mottle or blend mottle, the Redfyre 60 costs £4 16s.; in off-white, £5; and in black or copper lustre, £5 6s. It is available from stores throughout the country.

● When fixing a new shaft on to a household broom, always secure it in position with a wood screw, not a nail. This will enable you to take the shaft off easily later, if you want to.

● Make a neater job of tacking up pelmets, braid or gimp with matching Bambo "Rainbow" nails. These are sized for the purpose and are made in three non-rust colours—red, beige and blue. Sold in Bambo "Pre-packs," sixpennyworth in a polythene bag, you can buy these nails from ironmongers or from the makers, N. Bromberger & Son, Prince Avenue, Southend-on-Sea. From the same firm come steel hardboard nails which are square in section with specially designed heads which sink below the surface and do not show. These are also available in 6d. packs.

● The enamel on baths will last much longer if you put a little cold water in the bottom of the bath before filling it with hot water.

● Your safety in the workshop is assured with the new Wolf Safetymaster tool. This is fully insulated in itself and has no need for an earthing wire which makes it usable off a light fitting or two-pin plug. No chance, either of connecting the earth wire to the positive terminal and burning out the unit—there isn't an earth wire. The Wolf Safetymaster is slightly bigger than previous Wolf models. It has a ⅜-in. chuck and a complete range of equipment and attachments called "Supa-Power" equipment. This includes a bench drill stand, bench saw, comb jointer, lathe, long bore drill, fretsaw, etc. The Safetymaster costs £9 17s. 6d. from tool merchants. Attachments are extra.

● Dip a new household clothes line into liquid wax before you use it. This will give it a protective coating against the weather, and will also make it easier to clean.

● Build your own chandelier, with no fear of breaking valuable crystal drops. Martin Chandeliers are made entirely of transparent plastic which catches the light with almost as much sparkle as real crystal. They are sold in kits containing the materials to make chandeliers in many traditional designs, and prices ranging from £2 18s. 6d. to 12 gns. Postage extra. Catalogue and prices from Martin Chandeliers, 3-5 Spray Street, St. Helens, Lancashire.

CAN I HELP?

I like to hear about other people's homes. If you have ideas to share with other readers please send them to me, with photographs or rough drawings where possible. If you have a home-making problem I shall be glad to help you if you will write to me, Roger Smithells, c/o JOHN BULL, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for a reply.

WILL HONGKONG BE NEXT ON MAO'S LIST?

by HARRY HOPKINS

This tiny island on China's doorstep is vital to both East and West. It holds the key to a prosperous peace —or to total war

LAST August, when the big guns on the Chinese mainland were raining high explosive into Nationalist-occupied Quemoy, it largely escaped observation that Mao Tse-tung had simultaneously opened up a powerful radio barrage against a somewhat better-known "off-shore island"—and another "nest of Chiang Kai-shek gangsters and American spies"—some four hundred miles to the south.

And if, as some believe, in the East-West "war of nerves" it is now Mao's turn to take over the running for a while from Comrade Khruschev, here in Hongkong is a large nerve, fully exposed, ready to be set jangling almost any time he chooses—without the need to fire even a single shot.

Certainly a newcomer to Hongkong these days might be forgiven for finding that famous view from the Peak shot through with overtones of menace.

From the upper terminus of the cable tramway, 1,305 feet above the sea—a ten-minute trip—the eye travels down, down to the buildings crowded on the island's rim far below, and then moves on, over the waters of that wonderful harbour to the thronged streets of Kowloon, and on again to the green mountains of the New Territories.

Just over there, a half-hour's car trip away, lies the immensity of China, homeland of 580 million people, potential gathering ground of a human avalanche that could engulf overnight this tiny British outpost.

Below, through blue waters fretted by scores of strangely shaped promontories, tramp steamers, modern liners and venerable high-prowed junks weave an unending pattern. These waters are among the busiest in the world—and they are British waters.

If in your mind's eye you could trace, from this eyrie on the Peak, a rough square, enclosing seven hundred square miles of water, nearly two hundred islands—one of them larger than Hongkong itself—six hundred miles of coastline and 20,000 native boats (home of 200,000 Boat People), you would have marked out the teeming area where Hongkong's versatile police maintain some semblance of the *Pax Britannica*. To the east and to the west, in Deep Bay and Mirs Bay, British authority runs clear to the Chinese coastline.

The twelve-mile limit newly proclaimed by China—and duly rejected by the British Foreign Office—would include all this within Chinese territorial waters.

Was it, then, only of Quemoy that Mao was thinking when he took this far-reaching step? Or was Hongkong also in his mind?

Certainly there must be times when Hongkong—flaunting her Capitalist riches in the very face of China's Communist poverty, at once a spectacular monument to the western system and the shameful badge of China's former servitude—presents a tempting target.

But if they experience any qualms, the citizens of Hongkong rarely show them, as homeward bound each evening they take the cable car up to the white houses on the Peak.

For them, their situation, far from being charged with melodrama, is as homely and familiar as the Old Kent Road. For Hongkong has always lived like this, in China's pocket; her whole profession and livelihood has lain in being an "offshore island."

In the small central square, near the Supreme Court and the Club, rises the imposing white pyramid of The Bank—the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation building—which some say is the true seat of the colony's government. At its board table sit the chiefs of all the great "hongs," or merchant houses.

Quemoy's contrast

Close alongside, now overtopping it by twenty feet, rises the grey granite column of the Bank of China—the "Communist" bank.

It is a symbolic juxtaposition. If, in Hongkong, you sought the official representative of the People's Republic of China you would seek in vain. Yet in scores of commercial buildings, hundreds of smart, impeccable Chinese, indistinguishable from Hongkong's own brand (they are, in fact, very often from Hongkong) sit quietly transacting that republic's business.

It is all in startling contrast to that other "offshore island," shell-dazed Quemoy.

It is all very convenient—and has been so for a very long time. According to John Keswick, director of Jardine, Matheson, "the Princely Hong," Red China is making £10 million a month by availing herself of the very special skills of Hongkong.

And if, to a newcomer, the relationship is elusive, it nevertheless remains—as it has been for more than a century—realistic, intimate and continuous.

From the station at the Kowloon end

Hongkong, island of western wealth, taunts Red China. But it also earns her £10 million a month

Will Hongkong be next on Mao's list?

continued from previous page

of the Star Ferry, goods trains run through to Canton, and from Canton return. Passengers still have to get down at the frontier and walk across. But that didn't stop more than a million of them doing so last year.

Hongkong citizens go across to visit relatives in Red China. Students study in their native tongue in Canton University, returning to their Hongkong homes for the vacations. Some farmers have land on both sides of the Sham Chun frontier river. Half the food that Hongkong imports comes from China.

Here—should Mao be bent on stepping up the tension—is one exposed nerve that is readily accessible. In the troubled days of 1950, after the Communist take-over, fresh food supplies across the frontier were from time to time suddenly cut off.

If the halting of food imports from China can embarrass Hongkong, the stepping up from the Chinese end of another important import—people—could further imperil the colony's delicate equilibrium.

For today, here as in West Berlin, vast numbers have "voted with their feet," and, with more than two and a half million people—twice her prewar population, with which her services are designed to cope—Hongkong is bulging dangerously at the seams.

This, it is true, is by no means new. Hongkong's growth has always been nourished in this strange fashion on the troubles of the mainland.

And yet one thing is new—and it could throw a dangerous spanner into the classic, free-for-all, self-adjusting works on which Hongkong's fabulous success has been built.

In the old days, when too many refugees came in from China and things became very tough, the human tide would turn and flow back again.

They come to stay

But now, however meagre the rice bowl, the people still come. The squatter villages of sacking and flattened petrol cans and old packing cases climb crazily up and down the Hongkong hillsides, regularly devastated by fire.

Tenement buildings, fantastically honeycombed with cubicles and bedspaces, squirm with humanity.

In 1956 a survey showed 63,000 people living in sacking shelters on tenement rooftops.

Reluctantly, against its principles, the Hongkong Government finally imposed a quota, balancing incomings against outgoings. Along the seventeen-mile frontier there now stretched a police-patrolled wire fence.

Yet still the people swarmed in—by sampan at night, through smuggling organizations working from Macao, by perilous trips across the marshes.

Then in 1954, the Hongkong Government made another drastic departure from its traditional policy. For on Christmas night, 1953, a particularly disastrous fire had swept a squatter village, making 50,000 people homeless.

The government was forced at last to accept responsibility for housing the squatters.

Now the white, seven-storey squatter resettlement blocks are new landmarks on the Kowloon skyline. Built on low-cost lines, with a population density that would seem impossible in Europe, they have communal latrines, washing spaces and cubicles on each floor.

Yet the task remains fantastic. For to Hongkong's natural increase by births of 1,360 a week must be added the thousand or more newcomers who sneak in illegally from China.

And there is evidence that Red China —which protested indignantly against the British entry restrictions—is not unmindful of the dual advantage of lightening her own burden of "surplus" mouths while piling them on to the breaking back of Hongkong.

As Mao Tse-tung reopens his intermittent radio offensive against the Capitalist "running dogs" who infest this Chinese island, it is not too difficult to understand the Americans who, in 1950, when the radio was again crackling with a rich flow of vituperation, evacuated their women and children from Hongkong.

The Chase National Bank and a number of other U.S. business houses hastily closed their doors and departed. An American journalist wrote an article under the title: *The Last Days of Hongkong*.

Was he perhaps, after all, just a little too early?

The Old Hands of Hongkong receive any such suggestion with mingled incredulity and amusement. Fighting words over the ether? They have heard it all so many, many times before. More particularly—with the appropriate substitutions—from Chiang Kai-shek himself. Before the war Chiang ardently laid claim not only to Hongkong but also to large slices of Indo-China, Burma and India.

In fact, they would tell you, since Mao's triumph, Communist discipline has ensured a quieter life on the frontier, where Chinese behaviour, if frigid, is also efficient and rigidly "correct."

In a Hongkong street a refugee sets up shop. Every night hundreds are smuggled in—and with them, ready to strike, come Communists

And if, like President Roosevelt at Yalta, Mao insists that Hongkong represents the ill-gotten spoils of "outdated British Colonialism" and rightfully belongs to China, even then the Hongkong Old Hands are not unduly worried.

For that analysis, they know, is oversimplified.

Hongkong was never a colony in anything but a formal sense. It is not even particularly British.

It is a world institution, a vast international free market, warehouse and shop—and today one of the few bases left for world-ranging free enterprise.

There were no "natives" here to be exploited; indeed they flocked here as if to a gold rush—and Hongkong is the fruit of the fertile partnership that ensued, a partnership of Chinese industry and know-how and British order and finance.

When, back in 1840, the British China merchants, sick of confinement to the narrow frontage of their factories in Canton, had demanded of the Emperor a place of their own, the island they were offered was a malarious rock, inhabited by only a few poor fisherfolk.

Yet soon the buildings were rising—and have never ceased to rise since. The Chinese-British partnership which accomplished this miracle remains as strong as ever—and as limited. Its sole object: mutual enrichment.

At a time when, in true colonies, new, more liberal constitutions are coming into effect, Hongkong remains firmly undemocratic, without one elected member on the Governor's councils.

But absurdly obsolete or not, Hongkong is happy to go on betting on its continuing usefulness—to China as to the rest of the world. By its wits, it knows, it must live—or die.

And to show that it does not intend to die (rather than from any particular belief in the efficacy of arms), it has over the last ten years been vigorously putting its defences in order.

Old soldiers among the reinforcements now reaching Hongkong will find miles of new roads built through the New Territory borderlands, bridges strengthened to take tanks, and hidden strongpoints constructed.

Perilously hemmed in by steep hillsides, the main airport at Kai-Tak has been given a new one-and-a-half-mile runway, built out—an old Hongkong custom—into the sea.

Caught largely unprepared in 1941, Hongkong fell to the Japs in eighteen days. Today it might last a little longer. But there is little room to manoeuvre, and now as then the defenders' Achilles Heel is Hongkong's water-supply. Half is drawn from reservoirs in the New Territories—and even with these the taps are cut off for hours every day.

Even greater internal perils would face Hongkong in event of a determined siege from China. For within the gates perpetually stands a vast Trojan Horse, prepared to open up whenever Chairman Mao should give the order. The Peking-orientated "Federation" of trade unions has through its affiliated unions a paid-up membership almost twice that of the Formosa-minded "T.U.C."—and dominates the vital dockyards, transport and public utility spheres.

Half Hongkong's schools are in private Chinese hands, and though the Director of Education now has power to close them if used for Communist propaganda, obviously with China on his doorstep his dilemma is enormous. Firm control is hopeless.

Below the surface of Hongkong life, the luxury hotels, the courtly old *compradores*, the smart, smiling, American-style business men, the keen young students, lie the unfathomable depths of a great Oriental city.

Here flourish the Triad secret societies, which three centuries ago pledged themselves to the overthrow of the Manchu-Ching dynasty but now are more simply dedicated to "protection" and prostitution rackets and to blackmail.

In old, pre-Mao China style, politics, "squeeze," trade union activity and gangsterism are apt to be all inextricably mixed together.

Police control is normally swift and firm. The carrying of arms has been made a capital offence. An identity card system is in force.

But probably the best hope—if a somewhat desperate one—lies in those new, white flat-blocks, rising on the squatter resettlement estates, which might yet make individual citizens of the rootless, impoverished, anonymous human swarms of Hongkong.

When in 1951, at American insistence, an embargo was clapped on all exports to China, Hongkong was struck a blow which elsewhere would have been pronounced mortal. Yet today her merchanting skills have been redirected towards Malaya, Indonesia, Australia, Africa.

With the aid of industrialists who have fled from Shanghai, her industrial life has been vastly expanded, and Kowloon now has some of the most modern factories in the world.

Alarmed by this antlike industry, Germany, France, Canada and other countries have put quotas or tariffs on Hongkong's products—and Lancashire would like Britain to do likewise.

But if Hongkong's imports may spell unemployment in Britain's cotton towns, trade restrictions directed against Hongkong could spell international disaster. As ever, Hongkong's margin of security is precarious.

There are only thirty-nine years to run on our lease of the New Territories, leased from China for ninety-nine years in June, 1898, in order to supply breathing space, a back garden and reservoir for the ceded island and Kowloon.

Yet, in face of the prospect of such drastic mutilation, Hongkong remains as buoyantly confident as ever. New commercial buildings and apartment blocks reach higher and higher into the sky, till the place—visually as well as spiritually—begins to resemble that other island, Manhattan.

Enjoying their boom, turning over their pounds sterling and U.S. dollars and gold bars and Swiss francs in the colony's many banks, "Communist" or "Capitalist," the hustlers of Hongkong, European and Chinese alike, watch with ill-concealed distaste the unbusinesslike—not to say, dangerous—goings-on around those other "offshore islands" to their north.

The few restless nights they have are occasioned not so much by Communists as by possible new tariffs—and Americans like General MacArthur and Mr. Dulles.

For in Chinese waters the antithesis between the British and American philosophies of international politics is complete. Out here the Americans have always been missionaries; and Chiang Kai-shek was their prize convert.

Lesson for the world

The British, on the other hand, since the days when they waxed rich on the export of tea and the import of opium, have always been traders.

Up in Formosa, the Americans are still fighting the Good Fight, while down in Hongkong the British would still trade with the Devil himself—having escertained that his money was good.

A world dangerously worn to a frazzle by its ideological obsessions may well find in Hongkong's attitude the more useful corrective.

As China, still the "Middle Country" in the eyes of her proud, tough, intelligent and industrious people, modernizes, industrializes, she may well push, with all the weight of her 580 millions, against the ill-defined borderlands of India and the rich peninsula of south-east Asia where millions of overseas Chinese watch her progress with a proprietory light in their eyes.

As this giant among nations, now thoroughly roused from her long torpor, feels her strength, almost inevitably, and perhaps even without intention, she will threaten the peace of the old world.

If that threat is to be safely absorbed, patience, skill, calm, will be needed—and nowhere have those requisite qualities been so amply developed and demonstrated as in Hongkong, whose merchants for more than a century, by the magic of mutual self-interest, have had the Chinese Tiger feeding from their hands.

Mr. Dulles might do worse than spend his next holiday there. THE END

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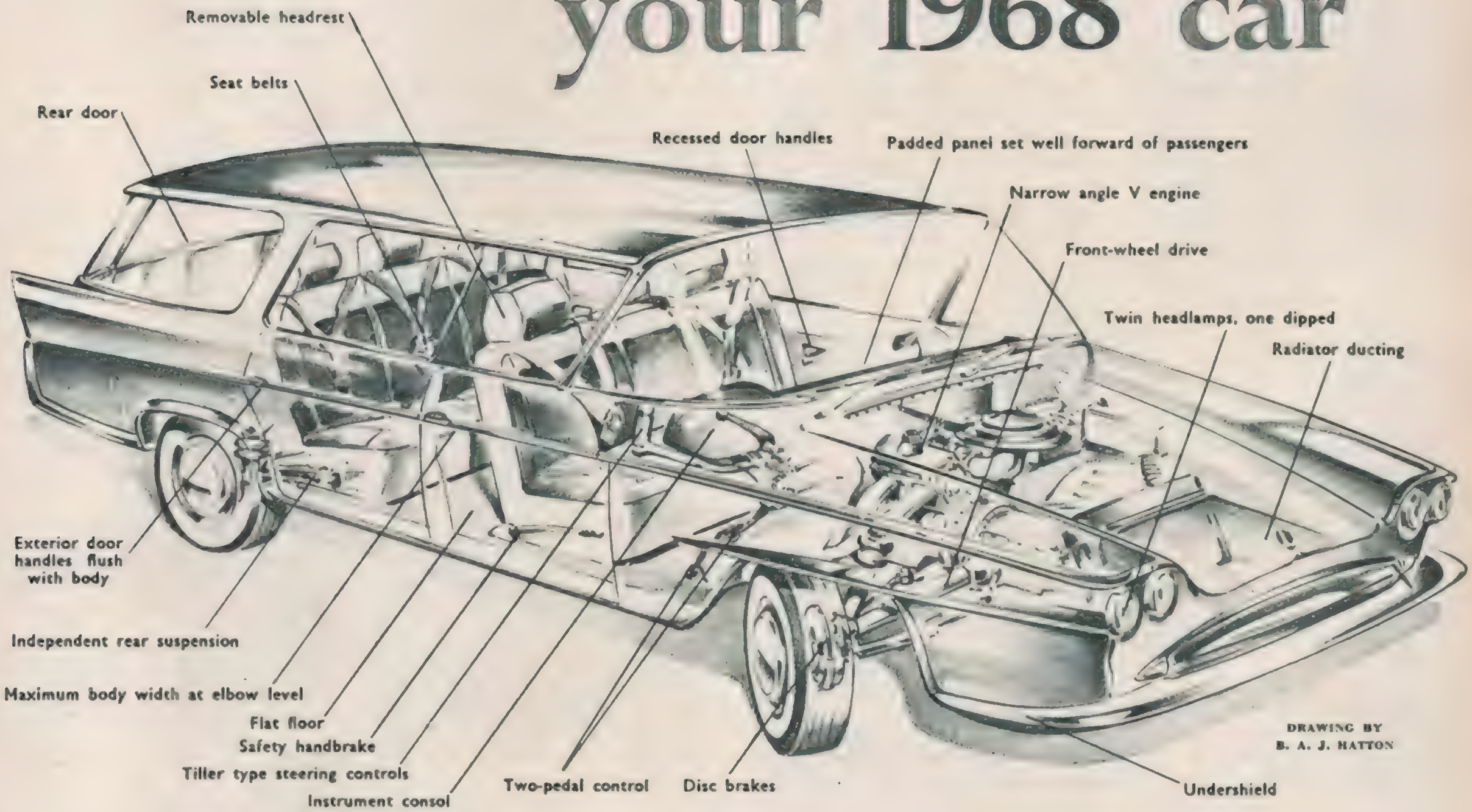
Here it comes—your 1968 car



Dazzling new designs are on view at this week's Motor Show. But in ten years you'll be driving a high-heel model—and steering with a tiller

by MICHAEL CHRISTIE

FOUR main considerations will determine the appearance and performance of cars on display at the Motor Show of 1968. The first is efficiency—if a shorter, more powerful engine is economically produced the length of the bonnet will shrink accordingly.

The second is comfort, for both driver and passengers—and the trend is towards "high-heel motoring" where gear-changing involves a minimum of pedal work and the slightest brake pressure from a woman's shoe will halt the car.

The third consideration is safety—and if designers apply the results of research already completed they may even have abolished the steering wheel and column by 1968 in favour of other controls.

Lastly there is fashion. Some cars change from year to year merely for the sake of having something different to sell. If the craze is for chrome, nothing will stop people carrying half a hundredweight of useless brilliance, though they would never consider carrying a heavy sack of potatoes permanently in the boot.

The shape of the car of the future will be primarily influenced by where the engine goes. A car is a box on wheels. Two wheels are linked to the engine and two keep the machine balanced.

The construction is always a compromise between the requirements of the power unit and the demands of the passengers, but in most modern cars both comfort and efficiency are reduced by having the engine at one end and the wheels it drives at the other. The trend of the future will be to put the engine on top of the wheels it drives.

If engines remain at the front, the drive will shift to the front wheels. If some makers want to continue with the back-wheel drive, they will find room for the engine nearby. Though the rear-engine pattern is established in Germany, France and Italy, we shall probably see very little of it here, except in the economy car. British designers prefer not to have the weight aft. A rear engine is "in with the passengers" and there is a marked noise from the cooling fan.

Front-wheel drive is quieter. It improves cornering qualities because the weight and the drive are on the front tyres, which dig into the road and pull the rest of the car round.

Behind a bonnet

Keeping the engine at the front also humours drivers who prefer to have a bonnet to drive behind, whereas the logical development of rear-wheel drive is for the motorist to control the car from the very front, like a tube-train driver. The visibility problems caused by a long bonnet on high-powered cars will be overcome by bending long straight engines into a V, cutting the overall bonnet length by a third.

The general adoption of front-wheel drive would be a revolutionary step, and—since the British are notably conservative when they are buying—it might not win quick favour. But motorists must eventually appreciate the advantages of more room, a lower centre of gravity producing better cornering and a decrease in weight which allows faster acceleration and better braking.

All this is achieved—which ever end the engine is set—by the abolition of that unnecessary evil, the prop shaft, which in most cars today transfers the drive from the engine at the front to the wheels at the back.

It adds uneconomic weight, allows inefficient losses in power, and introduces annoying vibration and noise.

The typical medium-sized car of 1968, therefore, will exploit the efficiency and performance of front-wheel drive or rear engine rear-wheel drive, making the interior space relatively luxurious. In trying to foresee its appearance, present American models can be almost ignored.

The Americans have created a Frankenstein monster combining ostentation and vulnerability which is even frightening them. When parking, they have difficulty in getting the boot near the kerb, let alone the rest of the car. Many American manufacturers are considering marketing smaller models.

European car body design is at present the speciality of the Italians. Their car bodies have often shown artistic but difficult lines which could only be economically produced by relying on Italy's cheap labour in the craft of skilled hand panel-beating. But many of the Italian ideas can be modified to forms which mass-production dies can squeeze out of pressed steel.

That is what the British have started to do. Two of the Big Six among British motor manufacturers retain Italian designers. The first offspring of this union to be announced—Farina's new Austin A40—foreshadows a trend which will have great influence on British taste in the next few years, the transformation of the station-wagon design into refinement and respectability.

Losing prejudice

This type of car is no longer a converted van. Women are dropping their prejudice against it, and once they are won over the success of this type is sure, for it is essentially a practical car. Its flat-floored rear, with the rear seat folded forward, will take the baby's carry-cot, the weekend shopping, or the lively dogs. It is especially useful for holiday baggage. Engineers are assembling an attractive car of this design, and many people will find that it does more than the work of a saloon without sacrificing appearance.

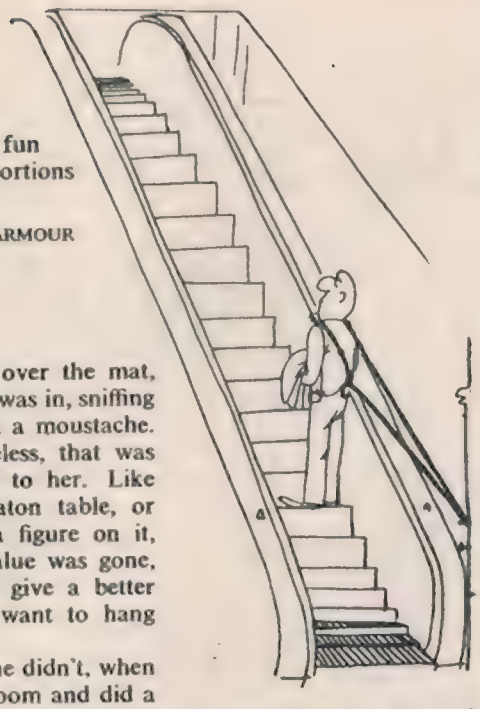
Apart from the stylish station wagon there is one other new type that I expect to see in 1968. That is a real economy car, using only two cylinders. It will be a genuine four-seater, not a bubble car, and it will probably have an air-cooled engine at the rear. This will be the utility model, with few refinements, extending motoring more widely among the population.

Alongside them will stand the medium-priced family model. This will be a saloon car, incorporating all the features

Mixture

Mixing pleasure and business
  Is something I've found to be fun
When mixed in the proper proportions
  Of 99 parts to 1.

RICHARD ARMOUR



Sally At Home

The man just stuck his foot over the mat, Sally told me afterwards, and he was in, sniffing round the hall like a ferret with a moustache. Antiques, anything old and useless, that was what he was after, he confided to her. Like that now, that nice little Sheraton table, or the rather fetching Old Chelsea figure on it, though of course most of its value was gone, pity about the chip. Still, he'd give a better price than most, if she didn't want to hang on to it, that was.

Sally was starting to say no, she didn't, when the man darted into the sitting-room and did a sort of minuet round an Indian brass bowl. He rubbed it with his finger and glowered at his reflection and said it might be worth a few shillings to him, say eight, and Sally agreed with him that she hadn't any special fondness for it—nor for the gilt looking-glass with eagles, that hung over the fireplace.

He looked more and more ferrety, Sally said, and dashed about all over the house, pricing articles of furniture, asking Sally if she wanted to keep them, and rushing on to the next as soon as she said no.

It was only when he was flourishing his cheque book and drooling at the mouth that she managed to get more than one word in edgeways and tell him that it wasn't her house at all, but mine.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

In short

Visitors' Half-hour

You're looking very well, old man. I think hospital food must agree with you.

I'm feeling fine now. And I've just won fifteen bob on a horse.

I didn't know you were a gambler.

It was my first bet. You see that chap in the end bed? That's Charlie. He comes round in the morning and asks us all what we want to back, and then he toddles off in his dressing-gown to the phone-box round the corner.

It's wonderful what you can do under the National Health. What are the nurses like?

Four Irish and one Nigerian. The Nigerian one's called Murphy, too.

Who's that in the bed by the door?

Oh, he's the man who won the war. We don't care for him much. See the old chap opposite him? They once ran some photographs of his kidney in the *Medical Times* and never paid him.

Disgraceful. He ought to sue them.

Then there's poor old Albert two beds away. His family got a frightful row from Sister for bringing him a bag of chips.

I must say you see life in here.

You certainly do. Don't look now, but you see that red-faced man in the bed by the radiator?

What about him?

You wouldn't think he was a nudist, would you? He and his pals were excavating a swimming pool at their new site when he got a pick through his foot. They had quite a job putting his clothes on to get him here.

You don't miss much gossip, do you?

Talking of gossip, that bald-headed old fellow with all the flowers is a civil servant and they've just given him some letters to put after his name.

Did he do something special?

He's not letting on. Charlie says he was the man who got the idea for pyjamas without pockets during the war.

E. S. TURNER

Offspring

When happy and intelligent, the objects of acclaim,
My wife remembers at their age that she was just the same,
But when stupid and bad-tempered, there's not the slightest doubt
The faults they have inherited from me are coming out!

DOUGLAS GIBSON

Foreign Affairs

A Rotterdam man complained to the Dutch inland revenue that his income tax assessment was forty-two guilders (£4) too low. Rejecting the suggestion that he pay the balance as conscience money he said "that would put me on the same level as tax dodgers."

Leo Beasley, a paperhanger of Omaha, Nebraska, pulled up sharply to avoid a dog. The sudden halt upset a five-gallon drum of quick-dry paste in his car. It splashed all over him—and by the time he reached his garage he was stuck firmly to the seat.

Here it comes—your 1968 car

continued from previous page

which are now individually known as luxuries.

It will be a car for lazy motoring. The engine will pull better, with increased compression ratio and better carburation. Fully automatic transmission may still be too expensive, but the clutch pedal may well have disappeared, the clutch being mechanically operated as the gear lever is pulled.

The engine may be designed so that any speed over ten m.p.h. can be achieved in top gear—a result I have already arrived at in one of the car models I have converted.

At any rate, in some way the car will pander to the inherent British desire to travel without the trouble of gear changing.

Assisting this "high-heel motoring" will be surer brakes. They will be either disc brakes developed from racing cars, which do not die after prolonged use, or power brakes which unleash a vacuum action at a slight squeeze of the pedal. Certainly, by 1968, the improved brakes will be fitted on the front wheels, where the brakes take eighty per cent of the stopping strain.

Effective brakes and smoother riding: these are the refinements one can most confidently prophesy. All four wheels will have independent suspension—when one back wheel bounces the other will not rise with it. The improved roadholding will boost sales in export markets.

What will the car *look* like? If streamlining is taken seriously the shape will be based on a pear drop with a low bulge in front for the engine. Not only air-drag, but wind noise will be largely eliminated.

Completing the streamline effect will be a perfectly flat undershield for aerodynamic efficiency. This "tray" between the car and the ground will cancel most of the air turbulence which is set up by an irregular bottom on a car.

The wrap-round windscreen will extend into a door-pillar set back to give a harmonious design as well as clear visibility. The sides of the car, viewed from the rear, will be shaped like brackets ( ) with the maximum width occurring at the driver's elbows, where he is at his maximum width. From the front the bonnet may curl down into a ducted radiator.

The passengers' view of the car may provide the biggest surprise, for the interior will give the designer the greatest scope.

Dr. Keith Simpson, the Home Office pathologist, analysing the casualties on British roads in one year, found that though drivers were liable to death or injury from the steering column or the windscreen, front-seat passengers were *fifty per cent* more vulnerable.

Projecting danger

They fractured themselves against the instrument panel, glove tray or hand-brake lever as well as the windscreen.

Designers may incorporate the lessons of this in the car of ten years' time. Safety belts could be standard fittings. A pull-up head-rest behind each seat could save a broken neck.

But the most striking innovation would be a restyling of the steering mechanism to remove the lethal spear of the column poised at the driver's heart.

Experiments have been made with a sort of tiller, and a car has actually been built with the steering manipulated as in an aircraft by two handles.

Some modification of this, as a standard fitting on some cars in 1968, is not a fantastic suggestion. THE END

The greatest raid of all

continued from page 10

once again on to the destroyer's fo'c'sle and down the other side. Roderick, last or nearly last, as he stepped again on that deck which he had left about an hour before, was aware of "an uncanny silence." Below the acid was eating its way through the copper wire. The explosive charge was waiting.

Passing on and crossing the fireswept dockyard, Roderick was bowled over with a bullet in the thigh. . . .

The Scots attack

No less swift and successful was the performance of Captain Donald Roy's team of Scots, detailed to the assault tasks on the western side of the dock.

Disembarking on the port side of the destroyer's fo'c'sle, and assisting between them a sergeant who had been wounded on board, they made off swiftly by the way they had learned so well from the model, silent in their rubber boots and carrying bamboo ladders with them. Lieutenant John Proctor having been wounded, "The Laird"—as Roy was known by his men—was now the only officer.

They had not far to go for their first task—silencing the gun positions on the roof of the big pumping station.

Before he could make his attack Roy saw the German teams in full flight across the shadowed dockyard, having made their escape by an outside staircase.

He lobbed two grenades on to the roof. Following up quickly with Sergeant Donald Randall, he found the guns deserted and blew them.

The Laird then turned and led off his assault party at the double to Bridge G over the Old Entrance, where he was to hold a vital bridgehead, through which the demolition teams, on completion of their tasks, would have to withdraw towards the re-embarkation area at the Old Mole. He reached the bridge safely, finding no Germans there.

To this position, extremely exposed and with only the flimsiest cover, they hung on with great determination for what must have been nearly an hour and a half, suffering casualties to half their number from a galling fire that was soon directed on to them from the far side of the Submarine Basin.

The whole of the German naval forces and establishments ashore were now dashing from their shelters and running to emergency stations as the "enemy landing alert" was circulated.

Behind the two little assault parties came the demolition teams for whom they were designed to provide cover.

At the southern end of the dry dock area was a group of three tasks entrusted to teams under officers of No. 5 Commando. Lieutenant Stuart Chant had the task of destroying the big pump-house; Lieutenant Christopher Smalley, of the walrus moustache, was to go for the winding-house, where there was situated the machinery for moving the big southern caisson in and out of position; Lieutenant Robert Burtenshaw, the tall, monocled jester, was to destroy the caisson itself with magnetic "wreaths" and 18-lb. charges if Campbeltown should fail to ram satisfactorily.

The protection party for all these demolition teams was provided by Lieutenant H. G. L. Hopwood, of the Essex Regiment, heavily moustached, powerful and, in the words of Donald Roy, "as staunch a friend as any man could wish to have in action or out of it."

At the northern end of the big dock Bill Etches, the young regular lieutenant of No. 3 Commando, having with him two Royal Ulster Rifles men from No. 12

Commando, Lieutenant Gerard Brett and young Lieutenant Corran Purdon, was charged with destroying the caisson at that end, and the winding-hut associated with it.

For these demolition teams, who were to have a pretty stiff time, the protection was provided by the hefty Lieutenant "Bung" Denison, of Roderick's unit. All these five demolition tasks were under the control of Captain W. H. Pritchard's friend, Bob Montgomery, and as an aide he had with him the stout-hearted Rhodesian, Sergeant R. Jameson, of No. 9 Commando.

Stuart Chant, leader of the little team ordained for the destruction of the pump-house, was a young Gordon Highlander previously on the London Stock Exchange.

His team consisted of four quite outstanding sergeants: Sergeant A. H. Dockerill, Royal Artillery, was a plumber from Ely and a former choirboy of Ely Cathedral; indeed, he sang as he went about his work.

His three comrades were all Norfolk men—Sergeant Ronnie Butler, dark-haired and well set-up, a village baker, whose pursuits of yachting on the Broads and swimming were apt to a commando's life, and Sergeants A. W. King and W. Chamberlain.

During Campbeltown's approach Chant's party were lying behind their steel screens, face up and feet forward against the shock of impact. A moment before the destroyer rammed, a small shell burst beside Chant and Chamberlain, wounding them both. A sticky feeling running down his leg told Chant that he had been hit in the knee; small splinters cut his fingers.

He lay momentarily dazed, but an inner compulsion told him to rise and put on his rucksack with its load of explosives. Three of the sergeants rose with him, but Chamberlain said, "Very sorry, sir, but I can't move."

Between them, however, they lifted up his thirteen stone and half-carried him as they moved forward to disembark, together with the men in Smalley's and Hopwood's teams.

Unexpected obstacle

Then, heavily laden with their explosives, sledge-hammers, axes and incendiaries, they scrambled, slid or fell down the scaling ladders on the port side. Somehow Chamberlain was got down and the team made for the pump-house by the route printed on their minds.

Chant was limping but could move fairly freely. They were right on Roy's heels, seeing the kilts flying just ahead. Without waiting for him to attack the German gunners on the roof of the pump-house, they went straight for the entrance, but met an unexpected obstacle when they found it barred by a heavy steel door.

Chant was momentarily at a loss, but at that moment Montgomery appeared and from spare explosives that he carried he took out a small magnetic charge, clamped it on the door and stood back. Chant made to light the short length of safety fuse, but found it difficult to strike the fuse with his bleeding fingers. He was disconcerted to find his hands trembling and he said to Montgomery: "Bob, for God's sake help me light this bloody thing; the chaps will think I'm scared."

With a laugh, Montgomery complied, the door was blown in and Chant and his sergeants then entered the pump-house.

The very difficult task that Chant's team now had to perform required two demolitions: the first, that of the great impeller pumps forty feet below ground, and the second, the electrical gear on the ground floor where they now stood, particularly the electric motors that drove the impeller pumps below, and the transformers. They flashed their torches around and, with the help of the glow coming in from the searchlights and the fires outside, they quickly noted that everything was exactly as they had seen it in the similar King George V Dock at Southampton.

Into the darkness

Chamberlain lay down at the top of the stairs and Chant, with the other three sergeants, started on the long descent below ground. Butler and Dockerill helped him down, with King following, carrying between them Chamberlain's sixty pounds of explosive besides their own.

Utter darkness lay beneath them, a darkness that the torches at their belts penetrated only as a cold, unfocused beam. Below ground level a cold dampness at once struck their faces. Their blindfold exercises at Southampton came back vividly to them as they counted the steps, but these were not quite the same.

At the foot of the long stairs, in the pumping-chamber at last, their torches showed them the four main pumps of the turbine impeller type and two subsidiary drainage pumps. They looked rather like giant lifebelts, or huge inverted mushrooms. Inside these big steel ring castings were the fast-revolving vanes which impelled the water in or out of the dock.

Under the drill so often practised, each of the four sergeants was to blow up one of the main pumps and Chant himself the two subsidiaries. But Chant now took over Chamberlain's target, leaving the subsidiary pumps to be attacked collectively.

They knew every step and every movement by heart. They wriggled out of their harnesses, laying them on the concrete floor, and took out the specially prepared plastic charges in their mackintosh covers. These, reaching up and over the big circular tubes, they slapped and moulded firmly on to the casting joints of the impeller pumps, which they knew from the Southampton dock engineers could not be replaced in less than a year.

Disturbed by two deep muffled thuds overhead which shook them deep below, they were told by Chamberlain far above that it was "only Captain Donald

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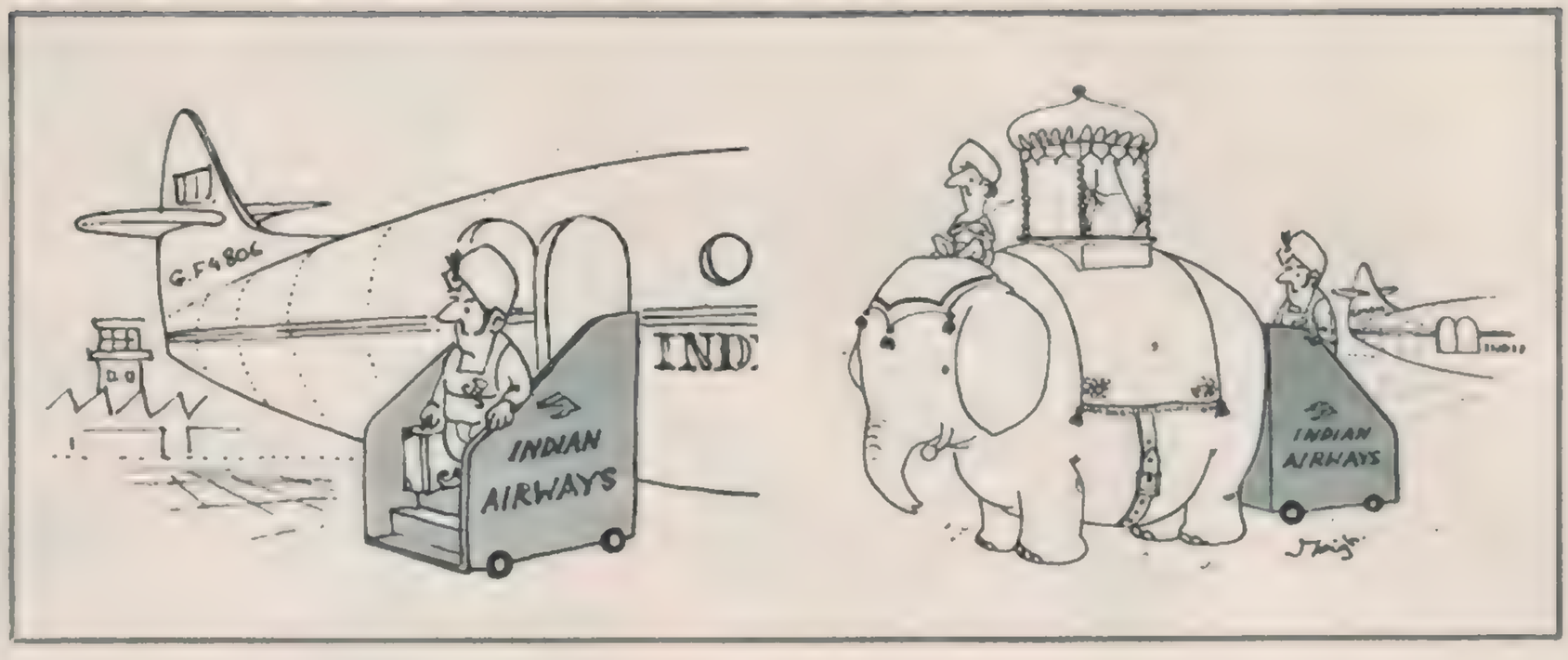

The greatest raid of all

continued from previous page

blowing up the guns." They worked quickly and confidently. Dockerill was quietly singing "Blue Birds Over The White Cliffs Of Dover" and the other two sergeants chatted casually in broad Norfolk. Their homely, easy voices gave Chant a glow of warmth and affection for these staunch companions, overcoming the pain of his wound and the handicap of his lacerated fingers. He heard one of them say: "Nearly finished, sir; can I help you?"

"No, thanks, I'm all right."

The charges laid, out came the ring-main. Together they unrolled and laid it out, hands feeling forward to other hands dimly seen in the chequered light. Out next came the cordtex leads to connect each charge to the ring-main by a clove hitch. The subsidiary pumps were quickly connected likewise. Finally, out came the two lengths of safety fuse, with igniters and detonators already connected, to be crimped to the main ring.

Seconds of safety

A hundred and fifty pounds of high explosive was now ready to be detonated at the touch of the duplicated percussion igniters. Three feet of safety fuse gave a delay of ninety seconds, which would give a fit man ample time to run up the stairs and out of the building.

It was Stuart Chant's duty to fire the charges himself, sending his sergeants up first and being himself last man out. But he was wondering how on earth he was to get up those forty feet of steep stairs.

Chant's knee was now slowing down all his movements. He therefore decided to keep Dockerill with him, sending King and Butler upstairs to remove Chamberlain to safety and to shout down when the way was clear.

He took one of the igniters and gave the other to Dockerill. Two long minutes passed in the underground darkness. Dockerill continued humming his song. No other sounds were audible and the battle above seemed far away. At last came the expected shout from above, and Chant, by pre-arrangement, gave a simple "one-two-three" to Dockerill. Simultaneously they pulled their igniter pins and the slow fuse began to burn along its three feet passage to the detonator and the cordtex.

Subaltern and sergeant turned and made for the stairs. With Dockerill leading and Chant clinging tight to his arm, they went up in the dark as fast as possible, Chant hopping two or three steps at a time.

They arrived out into the brief light and the din, and Chant ordered his team to take cover behind the concrete anti-blast wall opposite the door of the pump-house, but Montgomery was at hand and ordered them at once to cover farther off. They had no sooner reached it than the charges went up, bursting in the confined space below with great violence—"a great roar of sound that cracked our eardrums"—shaking the ground and throwing down a great concrete block upon the very spot where they had lain just before.

Stuart Chant led his team back to the pump-house. They had now to go in again to destroy the motors and electrical gear on the ground floor. Quickly in, they found the building filled with clouds of smoke and dust, the concrete floor caved in, two of the electric motors fallen through it to the pumping chamber far below and the other two lying at crazy angles.

It was obvious to them all that the place had already been sufficiently wrecked and that another destructive explosion was unnecessary. Chant contented himself, therefore, with ordering King to smash the transformer pipes and the gauges with his sledge-hammer.

Chant and his sergeants, having accomplished one of the most brilliant and impressive achievements of the whole raid, set out to withdraw according to plan, supporting between them their wounded companion.

When all was done, Montgomery, having observed a large shed at the side of the pump-house, opened the door and threw in an incendiary. There shot up "a colossal burst of continuous yellow fire," adding yet another to the series of fires that were now raging in the white beams of the searchlights.

Meanwhile Christopher Smalley and his small demolition team had had equal success in their attack upon the southern winding-house close by. His little team consisted of Sergeant G. K. Bright, the miner, Corporal A. Howard, Bombardier W. Johnson and Corporal E. Johnson.

His was the nearest of the objectives to Campbeltown. Within the building he saw the two big wheels by which the caisson was moved and the motors that drove them. On these motors and on the spokes of the wheels he placed his charges, connected all up with cordtex and, having had permission from Montgomery, pulled his igniters. There was no result. He reported to Montgomery and fresh igniters and safety fuse were fitted. These fired successfully and the whole building and all its machinery went up with a shattering concussion.

The team withdraws

Leaving it in ruins and blazing fiercely, Smalley went quickly to report to Montgomery, as we have seen, saying to him: "Bob, I have finished and I'm going to withdraw now." Returning to his team, he saw Lieutenant E. A. Burt's motor launch in the Old Entrance, disembarking his troops.

He decided to take this opportunity of effecting his withdrawal, instead of going to the Old Mole. He and his team ran to the quayside and embarked, but the boat was heavily engaged by the minesweepers and harbour defence boats in the submarine basin. The forward Oerlikon was jammed and Smalley tried to free it. But almost immediately he was shot dead. . . .

These two teams had been fortunate to meet no enemy resistance and to suffer no casualties while at their work. A different experience awaited those who, with equal dash and spirit, went out to attack the targets at the northern end of the dry dock—the far caisson and its winding-house.

Lieutenant Corran Purdon, charged with destroying the winding-house, was aged twenty and an Ulsterman.

With young Purdon were four remarkable corporals, also of No. 12 Commando—Corporal "Johnny" Johnson, Gordon Highlanders, a tough, sandy-haired, humorous Aberdonian, who was badly wounded in Campbeltown, but with extraordinary courage and fortitude carried through his tasks; Corporal Ronald Chung, Royal Engineers, the staunch and redoubtable half-Chinese; Corporal Bob Hoyle, Lancashire Fusiliers, a cheerful and good-humoured north countryman; and Corporal "Cab" Callaway, a "happy and utterly reliable" southerner.

Lieutenant Gerard Brett, who commanded the other team, was lean, studious, quiet-spoken, having something of the air of a kindly don. He was an assistant curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Brett's team had a strong Irish flavour, provided by Sergeant Stewart Deery, the sandy-haired Royal Inniskilling Fusilier and the senior n.c.o.; Corporal J. Ferguson, North Irish Horse; and Corporal Joe Molloy, a grand Southern Irishman. Of the others, Corporal "Jones the Post," Corporal Wright, the sapper diarist, and Corporal "Jumbo" Reeves.

The gallant team was completed by Corporal S. Chetwynd, Sherwood Foresters, little Corporal A. Blount, South Wales Borderers, and Lance-Corporal F. Lemon, also of the North Irish Horse. With only three exceptions, all were to be killed or wounded.

To this band was now added Lieutenant Robert Burtenshaw's team. His senior n.c.o. was Sergeant Frank Carr, a regular sapper, an erect and stalwart six feet, dark-haired, strong-jawed, quietly formidable, a model of devotion and integrity. With him were Sergeants G. Ide, H. McKerr and W. Fergusson, Lance-Corporal G. Stokes and Private D. Edwards.

Having got up from their sitting position on the deck of the wardroom, and Callaway having disembarrassed himself of the bookcase that had fallen on top of him when the destroyer rammed, Brett's and Purdon's teams, followed by Burtenshaw's, hitched themselves into their rucksacks, came up into the fury on deck and moved on up to the fo'c'sle. Coming to the smoke-shrouded hole on deck, Corporal Hoyle fell in. His trousers were ripped and burned off before he was pulled out and he went through the action in his shirt tails, his legs painfully burned.

Behind them came Robert Burtenshaw, the gay and valiant giant, an example to all who saw him of airy concern. His monocle was in his eye and he was swinging a walking-stick. He was passing jestful remarks and humming quietly. With the heavy rucksack on his back, one would have thought that he was off on a walking tour.

Their tiny protection squad, under

command of the massive Lieutenant "Bung" Denison, was from the start seriously depleted.

The three teams of destroyers scrambled down the shaky ladders, swung a trot round Smalley's winding-house and past Chant's target, their heavy loads jolting on their backs, and so up the west side of the dock—a run of fully five hundred yards.

Small arms fire was opened from the roof of a building on the protection squad as it led the way, but Denison and Private A. J. Elliott silenced it with a grenade and a syringeing from the tommy-gun. About a hundred yards farther on, from a trench behind a crane that reared its neck into the moonlike radiance on the dock side, a sharper fire was opened, wounding Elliott in the leg.

Denison ran to the crane, to use it as a cover, and, in textbook fashion, shot up the trench by tommy-gun while his two companions attacked with grenades, executing the little manoeuvre so effectively that when they rushed the trench, they found it full of dead. Denison then doubled forward to his allotted place beyond the caisson, his tiny squad taking up positions to protect as best they could the demolition teams from interference across Bridge M, and the wounded Corporal L. P. T. O'Donnell and W. Mattison gallantly limping up to play their parts.

Purdon and his four corporals made for their winding-house on the left. Finding the entrance barred by a heavy metal door, Purdon tried unsuccessfully to shoot out the lock, but the broad-shouldered Chung smashed it open with a sledge-hammer and they burst in. In no time at all they laid their charges on the spokes of the big driving wheels and on the motors. Sledge-hammers and axes smashed up the electrical gear.

When all was connected up to the ring-main, safety fuse and igniters attached, they withdrew outside, waiting for Brett and Burtenshaw to blow their caisson first.

For the two teams on the caisson were now carrying out one of the most hazardous of all the tasks in the dockyard area, under a violent fire which attacked them from several directions.

As they ran up to the caisson, Brett himself was dropped, hit in both legs and in the right arm. He was carried

FASHION—1

There may often be less vanity in following the new fashions than in adhering to the old ones.

Joubert

to the shelter of a wall, whence he helped to direct the operation as best he could from a sitting position. His team swarmed quickly over the caisson and at one end Corporals R. E. Wright and "Jumbo" Reeves killed with their pistols two Germans who appeared.

When Burtenshaw arrived very soon afterwards he saw Sergeant Deery struggling to open the hatch, or trap-door, in the middle of the caisson deck. He took charge of both teams and derided the enemy fire with his casual and jaunty air, an inspiration to all who heard his easy, coaxing voice.

In one particular, the caisson was found not to be identical with that of the King George V Dock. At either side of it there were wide, deep scuppers and the whole of the steel surface was decked over with timber, coated with tar and grit. With one important exception, however, the work went forward swiftly. The twelve 18-lb. underwater charges were dropped over the northern side and secured by their cords to the hand-rail. The ring-main was run out as the shadowy figures hurried soft-footed from end to end. The cordtex leads from the charges were tied to it. The safety fuses, with their detonators and igniters, were crimped on and laid out in duplicate at the western end.

Sergeant Frank Carr, having seen all this done, sought out Burtenshaw to report that the underwater charges were ready. He found him with Deery, still vainly trying to open the hatch which gave access to the interior of the caisson, where the wreaths had to be fastened magnetically to the side of the caisson.

Nothing that they tried to do would move it. Burtenshaw therefore ordered the sergeants to "clear the deck" while he tried, first with a magnetic "clam" and then with a wreath, to blow it open. Both attempts failed.

At that moment, aroused perhaps by the explosion itself, there burst upon them a murderous fire from all sides. The six Oerlikons on the towers to their left rear and the guns on the ships in the Penhouet Basin opened up. To their bursts were added a brisk small arms fire from the nearer of two tankers in the dry dock below and to their right.

Reply with pistols

Brett was wounded a second time. Burtenshaw, also wounded, ordered the teams to take cover and several of them, including Carr, Lemon and Burtenshaw himself, took refuge in the scuppers under the wooden decking on the dry-dock side. From here they returned the fire of the ship in the dock with the only weapons they had—their pistols.

Sergeant Carr, leaving the dockside after the tanker had been silenced, looked about for the familiar lanky figure of his officer, but could not find him. For somewhere in that stark dockyard scene Burtenshaw now lay dead.

Of this Carr knew nothing. The tall sergeant stepped again on the caisson and walked its full length but could see nobody alive. He examined the cordtex ring-main and the detonators to see if they had been damaged. Some others of the teams made another attempt to open the hatch. Seeing that it was unsuccessful, Carr decided that the underwater charges must now be blown.

He cleared everyone off the caisson, walked back to the western side, took up both igniters, pulled the pins and withdrew. The two feet of safety fuse burned through in its allotted sixty seconds and the detonating wave shot instantaneously through the whole assembly.

Carr walked back again on to the caisson to inspect the damage. There was little that he expected to observe visually, but above the din he clearly heard water coming through into the dry dock from each end of the caisson. He knew then that the gate had been damaged as much as could be hoped for and its repair would be long and difficult.

On Brett's orders what was left of the gallant band withdrew.

The time had now come for the waiting Purdon and his corporals. About their performance there was no doubt whatever. As soon as the caisson breakers had withdrawn, Purdon pulled the pins of his igniters. "It was a memorable sight," he recorded. "The entire building seem to rise several feet vertically before it exploded and disintegrated like a house of cards."

All the commandos' demolition objectives on the machinery of the great Normandie Dock had now been fulfilled with almost complete success in less than half an hour from the moment Campbeltown had rammed. Even if the destroyer herself should fail to blow up, it was now impossible to operate either of the caissons and impossible to pump out or refill the dock.

The great Forme Ecluse was useless for certainly a year at least, useless to Tirpitz, useless to every kind of ship. It was, indeed, to remain useless until long after the war was over.

This brilliant and remarkable feat, carried out at night, under a vicious fire and by a mere handful of men, is unique in military and naval annals. No other example exists of damage so vital and so far-reaching in its results being carried out so swiftly and with such economy of force.

A very few men in negligible time had achieved with certainty and precision what the largest bombing raid and the heaviest artillery bombardment might have failed to do.

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NEXT WEEK: Fire and death sweep the little ships . . .

While Britain shivers, the Canary Islands revel in the winter sun

PLAN NOW FOR CHRISTMAS IN THE SUN

Elizabeth Nicholas names the places where you will find a warm welcome

WHERE to find winter sunshine at reasonable prices is a difficult, but not impossible, problem. To be absolutely sure of hot sun in the depths of a European winter you must, of course, go somewhere that is enjoying summer—and that means a long journey.

If you have the time, a sea voyage to South Africa, Australia, New Zealand or South America takes care of all your living expenses for a couple of months or so. Before dismissing the idea as a pipe dream, reflect that you can sail right round Africa, a voyage lasting nine or ten weeks, for £185 inclusive.

However, for most of us a fortnight on a budget of £50 to £60 is nearer the mark.

What then?

Whenever I travel along the Mediterranean coast, I inquire about the winter climate of the places I visit. The answer I usually get is that, all things being equal, it is excellent until the end of December. Indeed, I have sat sunning myself, in thin clothes, at Cannes just before Christmas.

January, February and March—the months which we in Britain wish to escape most—are, in my experience, the most unpredictable. In February, 1957, I enjoyed first-class weather in Menton. But February, 1956, was a month that those who experienced it want only to forget.

But 1956 was something of a freak.

It's carnival time

In spite of this uncertainty, you will be very unlucky if you do not get some good, warm, sunny days on the Mediterranean, and an average temperature of nearly sixty degrees—pleasantly higher than that of London (forty-three degrees) or Glasgow (thirty-nine). The hills of Provence, spread beneath the clean blue skies of winter, are unforgettable.

Nice has its first Battle of Flowers on February 5; its second comes seven days later. All through the winter season, carnivals, fêtes, concerts and galas are held at resorts along the French and Italian Rivieras.

A few hotels close from November until Easter, and I'm afraid that those remaining open do not as a rule lower their prices for the winter. But if you can stay for a month or so, it is possible that a reduced rate will be quoted.

Southern Spain has a good record for sun, Alicante and Malaga in particular enjoying mild, bright winters. I have not visited either during the first quarter of the year, but I have basked in Malaga in November, and Alicante at the end of April was as warm as the warmest day of an average English summer.

Anyone seeking an interesting yet inexpensive air tour of this region might well consider a circular journey to Palma in Majorca, Torremolinos (near Malaga) and Tangiers, spending three days in each. Departures: December 21, January 18, February 15 and March 15; cost: fifty-seven guineas.

Up in the eighties

Southern Italy, also, can be lovely in early spring. I have bathed in the Adriatic at the end of February. Sicily, too, is wonderful in March.

Farther north, the Italian lakes have long been a favourite wintering place. Ascona, on the Swiss shores of Maggiore, is another resort that prides itself on a sunny climate. It is a pretty little town, and an excellent centre for sightseeing.

Farther afield, I can recommend Madeira or the Canaries. I have relaxed in comfort in these islands in all the worst of our winter months.

In Funchal, in January, I have known a temperature of eighty degrees. In February, I have swum in the sea off Tenerife—and I never swim unless it's really hot. But at either Madeira or the Canaries you must expect to spend at least £85.

North Africa is worth considering. Although I have never visited Tangiers in midwinter, I have found it delightfully hot in November.

The cheap night tourist flight to Gibraltar helps to cut the cost of reaching Tangiers. If you are not pressed for time, you can travel to Gibraltar and back, tourist class in a big ship, for around £35.

Marrakesh, in Morocco, is famous for its winter mildness.

A fifteen-day all-in air holiday there costs eighty-nine guineas; a similar holiday at Ain Diab, near Casablanca, seventy-four guineas.

NOW THE BATTLE FLARES UP—WITH

The Northern Light

by A.J. CRONIN

HENRY PAGE, owner-editor of the *Northern Light*, was dedicated to his paper. When a Fleet Street gutter-press combine tried to buy him out, he scornfully refused to sell. . . . Whereupon his opponents bought up a local rival, the *Daily Chronicle*, and began to fight him ruthlessly for readers. . . .

Page was up against it. The struggle drained away his financial reserves. On top of that, his health was poor, and he had family worries. He got no support from his shallow wife Alice, his spoiled teenage daughter Dorothy, or his neurotic son David, who was living like a recluse in the nearby fishing village of Sleedon. Only his warm-hearted, working-class daughter-in-law, Cora, was any comfort to him.

The *Daily Chronicle* was being run by two unscrupulous Fleet Street men, Harold Smith and Leonard Nye. They fought Page with every weapon they could devise—but, in spite of their efforts, Page's integrity looked like winning the day.

The *Northern Light* was recovering lost circulation when Nye thought up his dirtiest trick so far. He had a feeling that he had seen Page's daughter-in-law before—and she was obviously scared of him. When he and Smith sat behind her at a concert, his presence brought her to the edge of faintness. She was sitting next to her husband, and Nye suddenly heard him say, "Quickly, get a glass of water for Cora."

It was the first time Nye had heard her name—and it hit him like a bullet. By God, that was it! Cora Bates . . . Blackpool . . . that summer three years ago. . . .

PART FOUR

NYE didn't wait to observe the restorative effects of the water. He reached under the seat for his hat. "Let's go," he said to Smith.

"What . . . already?" Smith said. "We can't move while they're playing."

"Never mind. Let's get out of here. It's important."

He got up and, followed awkwardly by Smith, squeezed his way into the aisle. Cora, very pale, was acutely conscious of their departure, and Page himself gave them an indignant glance.

On the way back to the hotel Nye maintained a brooding silence, refusing to answer Smith's persistent questions, but when they arrived he preceded him into the bar, ordered a drink, and began to speak.

At first Smith did not fully grasp the implications of what Nye told him. His mind was slower, grooved in altogether different channels.

"I can't believe it," he said at last.

"No?"

Nye wasn't going to argue; the certainty of his conviction made it a waste of breath. The waiter brought his pint. He took a long, appreciative pull. Beer had never tasted better to Leonard Nye.

"Are you sure?" Smith said again.

"As sure as I'm sitting here. One thing about me, I never forget a face."

"Then why didn't you recognize her at once?"

"I only saw her for a minute at Blackpool. It was three years ago. And I wasn't interested . . . not then."

"But . . . only for a minute. You must be making a mistake."

"Look," Nye said, "I'm a reporter. It's my job to remember. I was up in Blackpool doing a feature on the Wakes. I knocked around a lot with a fellow called Haines. He was the one on the case. I told you I wasn't interested. But I happened to be picking him up that afternoon . . . just got a glimpse of her. And it registered."

"She looks the last person in the world. . . ."

He was so hard to convince that for an instant he almost shook Leonard, who burst out angrily:

"Couldn't you see how worried she was at the concert? She's got something to hide."

"But they're all such decent people."

"There's a skeleton in every cupboard, Smith."

"You think the Pages know?"

"I'm damned sure they don't. That's just where we're on velvet."

At last Smith knew what was in Nye's mind.

"No, no," he protested hurriedly. "I can't see it that way. Even if you're right, we couldn't. . . ." He stopped short. The perspiration which afflicted him in moments of stress broke out all over him. "It would be fatal if you were wrong. It . . . it would be criminal libel."

"Relax, Smith," Nye said easily. "The fact is, we were sunk. And now, with a bit of luck, we're home."

Smith stared at Nye. He seemed half convinced. He said, "If you're right it might . . . in a way . . . alter our position. But I won't be rushed. First you must see the girl. If we can only get an admission, then we'd . . . well, we'd know where we were."

"Don't worry, I'll see her," Nye said. "But first I'm going to get on to head office. I'll tell them nothing . . . they don't have to know a thing about this . . . I'll simply swear to them that if they give us another three weeks' grace we'll hand them the *Light* on a platter."

He finished his drink, got up, and started out for the office.

When David and Cora arrived home that same evening, David was still brooding on the strangeness of his wife's behaviour at the concert. With an exaggerated sensitivity which was his curse, he had felt that Cora's distress was caused by the presence, immediately behind them, of the editor of the *Chronicle*.

As she prepared their simple supper, he made no reference to the events of the afternoon, yet he hoped that she would do so. Her silence, which indicated that her thoughts were elsewhere, confirmed his suspicion. Presently she said she had a headache and went upstairs.

DAVID attempted work for an hour, less for what he might do than to give the aspirin tablets, which he had told her to swallow, the opportunity to take effect. But she was still restless and awake when he came to bed, and presently she put her arms round him and whispered, with a troubled intensity, which heightened his uneasiness: "You still care for me, don't you?"

"You know I care for you."

She pressed her body against his.

"You never show me, now."

He saw that she wanted him to make love to her—and he wanted her, too, but he would not yield. He said patiently: "You know what I keep explaining to you, Cora. I have to try and strengthen my will in every way. Besides, by doing without, we get to love each other more."

She kept silent for a long time, then withdrew to her side of the bed. At last, in a different tone, she said: "I've been thinking on what you said about getting a bit stale on your book . . . and wondering if you wouldn't like us to go away for a while. A change might be good for us."

Surprise silenced him for a moment.

"I thought you liked Sleedon."

"Oh, I do. But it might be nice to have a break."

"Where would you want to go?"

"Anywhere. You've always said you'd take me to France sometime. I'd like to go with you to some quiet little French village. . . ."

His anxiety increased. He saw now, with a sinking dismay, that the encounter with Nye had been serious enough to arouse in her the instinct of flight.

He scarcely knew how he answered, except that he left the matter indefinite. She did not persist and, after a while, fell into a restless sleep. Listening to her breathing in the darkness, he began to seek for the cause of her distress. Obviously, before he met her, she had known Nye. But in what capacity? Had he been her employer, her associate, her friend?

A stab of pain ran through his nerves. Of all the men he would have wished her not to know, this fellow was the prime example. From the first glance he had felt an instinctive antipathy towards him. Dwelling upon this, David was conscious of a tightness binding his forehead. He lay, rigidly immobilized, harassed by doubt, suspicion, jealousy, and, above all, by fear for himself.

Just over two years ago he had suffered what was politely termed a nervous breakdown. It had begun as a general lassitude, and was succeeded by a depression of frightful intensity. In this darkness of the spirit he became the prey of his fear, not only that he might go out of his senses, but that he had been marked as the victim of some dreadful calamity. As this developed, it shaped into a complex of persecution and he took to concealing his service revolver beneath his pillow, to be prepared for the materialization of his unknown enemy.

AT first he had been treated by Dr. Bard, then he was removed to a private institution on the cliffs at Scarborough. Here a total blank supervened, a period of which he recollected absolutely nothing. They must have put him to basket making, which he accomplished in a state of stupor. He remembered his surprise when, six weeks later, as the opacity began to lift, he discovered that he had made with his own hands more than two dozen wicker trugs, all of a close and intricate design, something he could never have accomplished in his normal state.

The institution doctor, Evans, told him, with a cheerful smile, that he was breaking through. "You're out of the woods, my boy, and into the undergrowth." Yet he still slept badly, was

BLACKMAIL AND FEAR

From Cora's past came a secret terrifying in its power to hurt. With it Nye was sure to smash Page

still frightened, silently depressed, withdrawn from life.

At this point Evans, in an effort to restore his confidence, gave him permission to leave the institution grounds for an hour every evening, advising him to stroll on the promenade and mingle with the people there. David had no wish to go, but, since he liked the doctor and had indeed acquired a sort of automatic obedience to him, he went—not to the crowded esplanade, but to the comparative solitude of the old fishing harbour, where he sat watching the slow surge and recession of the sea.

One evening he heard somebody address him. He raised his head and saw a girl, tall, rather poorly dressed, very pale and thin, staring down at him with big hazel-dark eyes. Something in her expression made him sense instinctively a hopelessness equal to, if not greater than, his own.

He made some reply, trite enough, but enough to induce her to sit down on the bench. They talked very little and only of the most banal things, but there was comfort in what was said. When it was time for him to leave he hesitated, tongue-tied, then something broke through: he asked her to meet him the following evening.

They met and continued to meet. He began to feel a lifting of the darkness and to see the world with altered vision. It was as though life had been restored.

In his own strange way, he was in love with Cora. He had no illusions, seeing her as she was, with all the limitations of her upbringing, her lapses of grammar, simplicities and undeveloped mind. And yet something within him found in these apparent drawbacks the very qualities which put him at ease in her society.

A fortnight before he was due to return to Hedleston they were married at the Scarborough register office.

All this flickered through David's mind with a new intensity as he lay awake, vainly trying to find in their

Page tried to find a consoling word, but he couldn't. Cora broke the silence. "It's true what they told you," she said

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

CLEAN FRESH

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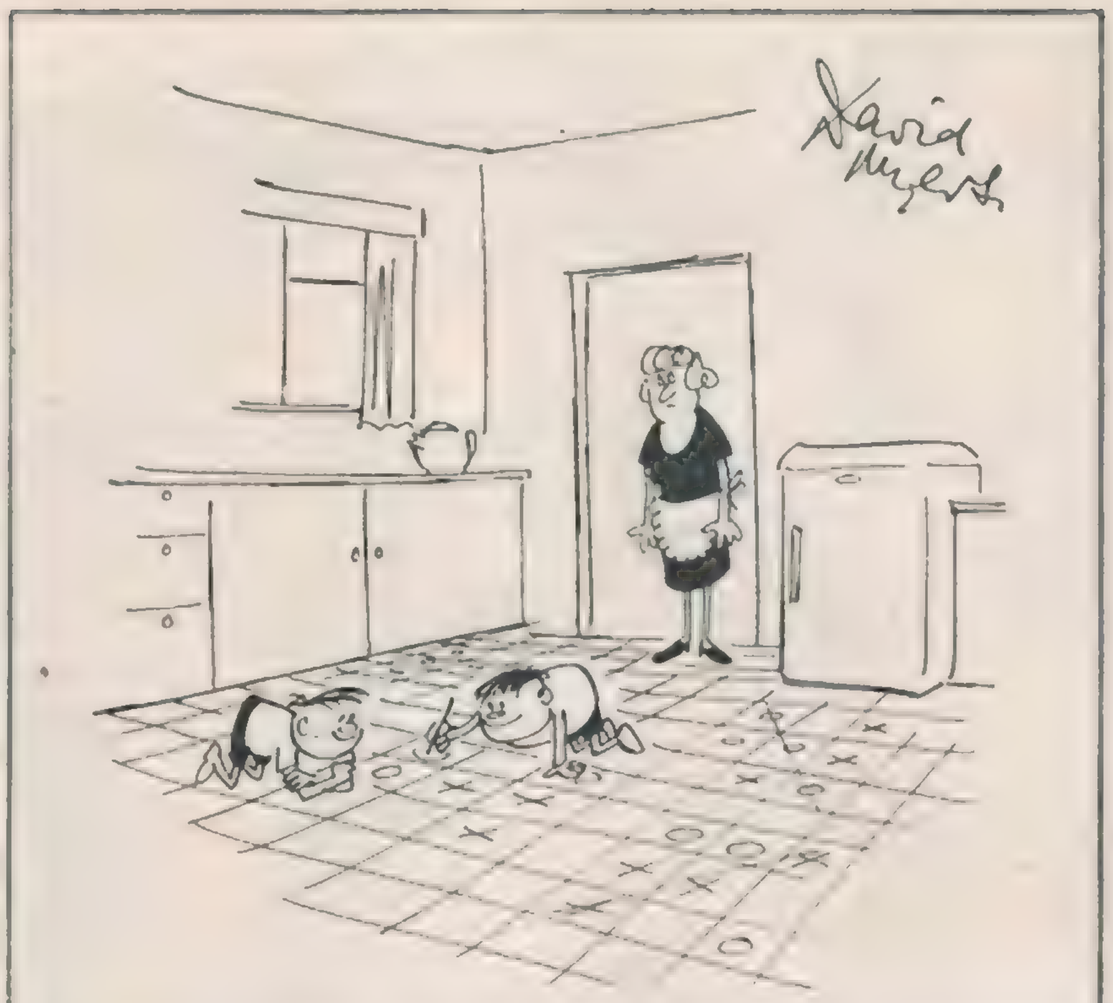


The Northern Light

continued from previous page

beginnings some clue to Cora's present behaviour. Towards morning he had perhaps an hour of sleep. He awoke to find that Cora had gone downstairs. When he joined her at breakfast, neither made any reference to her remarks of the previous evening.

After breakfast he could not bring himself to sit at his desk. When he told Cora he would take a walk to the breakwater, he could have sworn she looked relieved. The more he thought of it, as he tramped down the cliff road, the more he became tormented by the certainty that for some reason she had wanted him out of the house.

The circuit of the breakwater became a dragging penance. At last he turned back, began to walk up the hill. Then at a bend of the road, almost at his own gate, he drew up short, his worst fears confirmed.

ON that same morning Nye, having breakfasted, and run through his mail, set out for Sleedon in a drive-yourself car. Outside the village he stopped the car and parked it off the road by a deserted barn—he saw the need for discretion, up to a point—then he walked into the village. He found the house and rang the bell.

The door opened. It was Cora.

"Good morning." He gave her a bright smile. "Mrs. Page, I believe. I'm Leonard Nye, representing the *Daily Chronicle*. I wonder if you could spare me a few moments."

At the sight of him her face did not greatly change. He could tell that she was frightened, but she had been expecting his visit and had braced herself to meet it.

"What do you want?"

"I understand your husband's writing a book. I'd be glad of a few details."

"My husband is out at present."

"Then I'm sure you will oblige me, Mrs. Page." He whipped out his notebook. "Now, what is the title of the proposed work?"

"You must ask my husband," she said, and pushed the door shut. Or she would have shut it if Nye's shoe had not been in the jamb.

"At least, Mrs. Page," he said, "tell me something about yourself. You are recently married, I believe?"

She did not answer.

"And before your marriage you were a Miss Cora Bates."

Her face was drained of colour now, and her dark eyes had a hard look.

"You know a lot, don't you?"

"Well"—he smiled—"it's our job to know a few things. You were in Blackpool, weren't you, in August three years ago?"

"No."

"Strange." Nye shook his head as if puzzled. "I'd have sworn you were one of the hostesses at the Alhambra Palais de Dance."

"You was never in the Pally at Blackpool." Cora, since her marriage, had begun to speak much better, but now in her anguish she reverted to the language and the accents of her youth.

"I'm not a dancing man," Nye said. "I just happened to hear you were there."

"Who told you?"

"A friend. A professional acquaintance by the name of Haines. Does that mean anything to you?"

"No, it doesn't."

"Oh, well, no matter," Leonard said carelessly. "It's just that I happened to be with him in court when you were sent for trial."

He had saved the punch line for the last. It knocked her cold. She leaned against the door post, her eyes big and dark in her white face.

"Why can't you leave us alone?" she said at last, so softly he could scarcely hear her. "Why d'you have to come and poke into people's lives? . . . I'm happy, for the first time in my life . . . here . . . with a husband to look after. . . "

"He's a lucky man. I don't mind telling you I envy him."

She didn't speak for a long time, then, in a low, indistinct voice, looking at him fixedly, she said: "What do you want?"

JUST for a second Nye felt tempted. She was a damned fetching piece and the house was empty. But no, he wasn't taking chances.

"We only want your help with old man Page," he said, easily. "Just own up when the time comes and that'll be enough."

Very slowly she said: "You wouldn't have the face to tell on me. Not you."

"Come now, Cora. It may amount to nothing, in the long run. If we keep our heads, nobody's going to get hurt too badly."

"I see," she said, in an indescribable tone. "You're real good, you are . . ."

There was a long pause, then she turned away and slowly shut the door. This time Nye made no effort to stop her. He put his notebook in his pocket and went out through the gate.

He hadn't taken a dozen paces down the road when he ran straight into

young Page. Instinctively David retreated a step, staring at Nye, with his head thrown back.

"What are you doing here?"

"Taking a walk," Nye answered coolly.

"You've been in my house."

"I wish I had."

"Now look here"—David's cheek had begun to twitch—"I don't know what you're up to, but I won't have you hanging around."

"It's a free country."

David was shaking all over. "If you interfere with my wife I'll . . . I'll break your neck."

"Look out for your own neck, chum," Nye told him, then, with a gesture of contempt, he walked away.

David's heart kept on beating like a hammer as he stood there. Nye had been to the house and Cora had expected him. Beyond that, he could not think clearly.

He went slowly towards the house. Cora was seated by the window that overlooked the garden. At first she did not see him, then she started slightly and got up.

"You had a good walk," she said. "Are you going to work now?"

"I think I shall."

AFTER a silence, and as though excusing her inactivity, she said: "I've got nothing done this morning, not a thing. I'm even behind with lunch. So I shall have to run down to the store."

"Something you've forgotten?"

"Yes."

"Let me get it for you."

"No, no . . . I'd like a breath of air."

He noticed that in going out she took her purse from the drawer of the Welsh dresser. Since they had a monthly account at the store he was at once aware that she had gone to telephone.

He began to pace up and down. Then he went up to his workroom and sat there listening for Cora's return. After what seemed an interminable time the front door opened. She went into the

FASHION—2

Fashion seldom interferes with Nature without diminishing her grace and efficiency.

H. T. Tuckerman

kitchen and from time to time he heard her movements as she prepared lunch.

At lunch, not very cleverly, she brought the conversation to the subject she had raised last night.

"You must have thought me silly, . . . when I spoke of us going away."

"Not at all." He had to reply on the same level of pretence. "It's very natural to want a change."

"But you couldn't because of your book?"

"The book isn't everything. If you really wished it, we could go."

"Do you mean it?" Before he could answer she went on, with a little rush. "I was reading in a magazine the other day about a man who went out to California and grew oranges. The climate was wonderful, warm and sunny. He made a lot of money, too. Couldn't we do something like that?"

"I thought you wanted to see France."

"That was just for a holiday."

"And this would be for good?"

She nodded, and was about to speak, but instead she burst into tears.

He went over to her. "For God's sake, Cora, what is the matter?"

"Nothing."

"There must be. You're so upset."

"No, no." Somehow she managed to stop crying. "It's just one of these days when everything goes wrong."

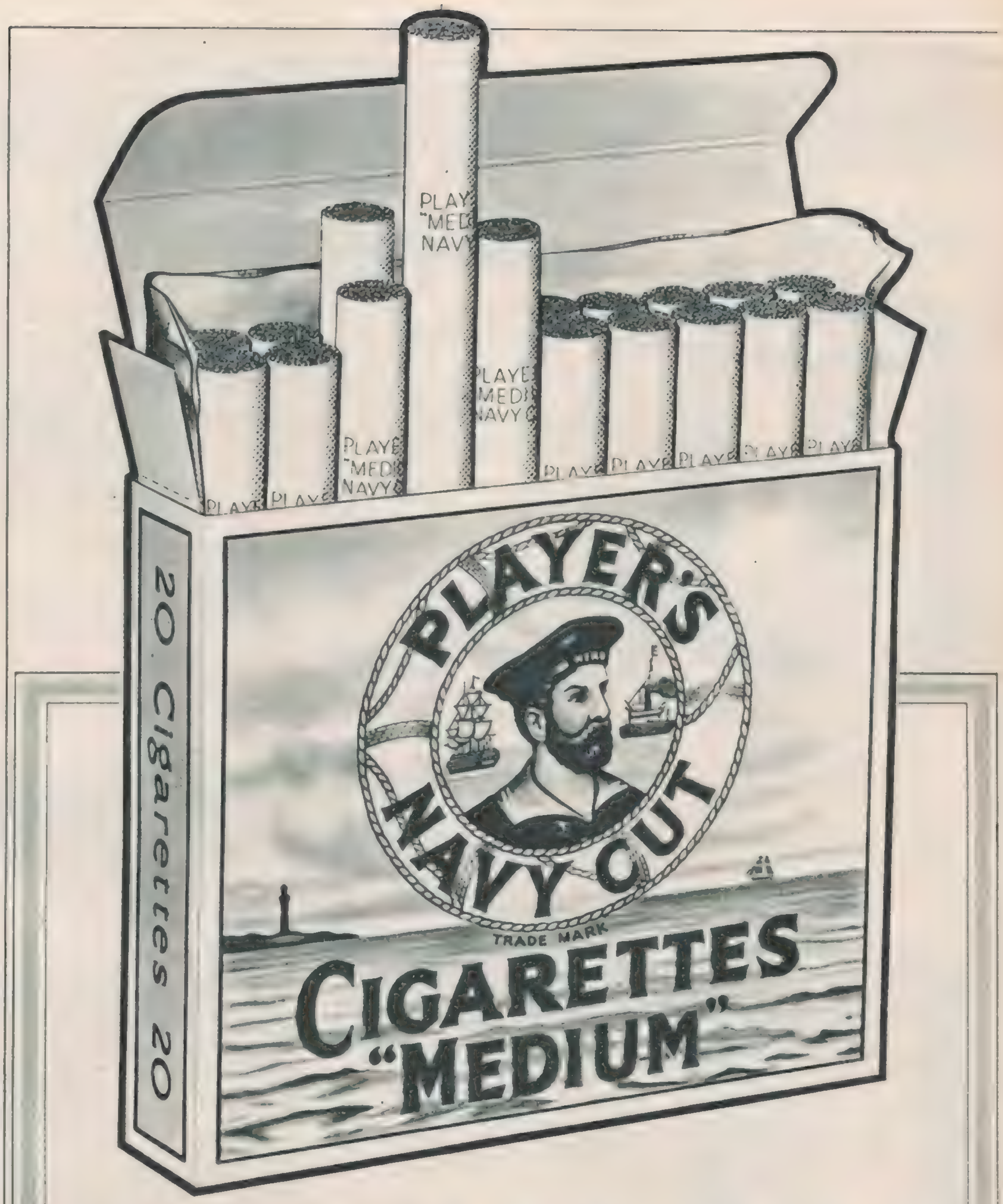
He looked down at her rigidly. "It's more than that; somebody is annoying you . . . this fellow Nye."

"No, no. It's nothing, nothing. I don't know him. . . ."

"Then why did he come here this morning?"

"He came to ask about your book." She was almost hysterical. "I swear to you, David. . . ."

By this time, David was himself in



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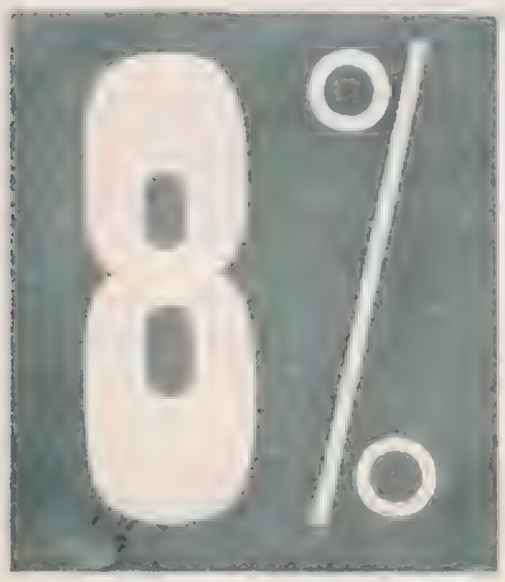

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The Northern Light

continued from previous page

such a state he could barely speak. "If he's trying to hurt you he'd better look out. I'll go and have it out with him."

"No, no . . . there's no cause for you to go. We shan't ever see him again." She took both his arms and pressed them hard. He felt her body trembling. "Just stay with me, David. And don't let nothing come between us. . . ."

MEANWHILE Nye had made his way back to Hedleston. The journey took just under an hour. He found Smith in the deserted lounge of the Lion. He said: "Right. It's exactly as I told you. She's the one."

"Yes . . . yes," Smith said, as if he were thinking about something else.

"What's the trouble? I tell you Cora is our bird."

"I know. She telephoned me."

Nye sat down and looked at him. Why the hell had she done that?

Smith said, "She was so upset I could scarcely make her out. You must have used her very hard." He shook his head. "It's a nasty, dirty business. I'm having nothing to do with it."

Leonard had never seen Smith so jittery. But he could handle him.

"All right," he said, "we'll pack our bags and go back to Somerville. I'll resign. You'll be fired. After this botch you'll never get another job. Your name'll stink all over Fleet Street."

Smith bit at his thumbnail. At last, he said: "But, Leonard, even if we did . . . what you suggest . . . and persuaded Page to sell, how do we pay him? Somerville is really hard up."

"What a babe you are, Harold." Nye smiled coolly but in a companionable manner. "Don't you see that an outright sale is off the menu now? A wholesale appropriation of the *Light* would set the entire town against us all over again. No, no, what we'll propose is a friendly amalgamation on a fifty-fifty basis. Each paper will contribute its goodwill and plant. Page will retire, and be paid off with a percentage of the net receipts every year. We don't put out a penny of capital."

As he stared at his companion, carried away by his latest ingenuity, Smith's actuarial eye glistened.

"Why . . . that way we'd be fair enough . . . yet make a most advantageous deal. What d'you suggest as our first move? Phone Page?"

"No. Send a letter by hand. Ask for an appointment."

Smith thought for a minute. "One thing . . . important. We'll need your friend Haines. You'd better phone him at once."

"I'd thought of it," Nye said. . . .

At half past two that afternoon Henry Page left the Northern Counties Club and set out at an easy pace for his office. He had just lunched with Wellsby, who had wanted to discuss details of the coming testimonial dinner.

As he walked, he fell into a pleasant reverie. After weeks of strain and almost insupportable anxiety his victory, in the struggle forced upon him, was an unimaginable relief. At home, too, the others had shared in the general upsurge. Dorothy seemed to show a glimmer of regard for him, and he had hopes that his relations with Alice might be entering a more equable phase.

He had not been back at his desk for long when Moffat brought in a note which she said had just been delivered by hand. He opened it and read it.

My dear Mr. Page,

There has come to our knowledge something of very considerable moment which may seriously affect you. In your own interests I advise you to give my colleague and myself an appointment at your earliest convenience so that we may discuss it with you. The matter is urgent and important.

Believe me, with all regard,
Yours very faithfully,
Harold Smith

Henry drew a sharp breath. What on earth were they driving at now? But after a moment or two's thought he decided to ignore it. He knew that Smith and his associate were on the point of leaving Hedleston. The letter was no more than a final thrust. He threw it into the wastepaper basket.

For the next hour he concentrated well. He was deep in work when he heard a quiet tap on the door. "Come in," he called and, glancing up, saw Cora standing there.

"Am I disturbing you?" she said, and went on hurriedly, as though excusing herself. "I had an errand in the town . . . and I couldn't think to go home without looking in. But if you're busy, I'll just be off."

"Don't you dare. Come in and give me your news . . . how are you, my dear?"

"Oh, me . . . I'm never anything but well."

"You've quite got over your faintness at the concert?"

"It was nothing. I'm not used to crowds any more." There was a pause, then she said, "The question is . . . how are you?"

"Pretty spry, considering."

She shook her head. "David and I had a long talk about you last night. You know how fond of you we are . . . and we're both ever so worried. We think you've been doing too much. In fact, we think that for your own sake"—she drew a quick breath—"you should have a long rest."

"How long?" He smiled.

"Well that you should retire."

Sheer surprise silenced him. Then he said: "My dear . . . at this late stage . . . are you advising me to give up the paper?"

"It would mean that, I suppose."

"But I have just put up the fight of my life to keep it."

"Yes, you've won. That's just it. They'd give you ever so much more money now. . . ." She took his hand. "Do give over . . . it really would be best. . . ."

The urgency in her voice, even more than the complete unexpectedness of her appeal, suddenly caused Henry a distinct misgiving. Could some connection exist between her visit and Smith's letter?

He said gently, "Cora, you're not in any sort of trouble, are you?"

She started—it might have been from surprise.

"No. . . ." A frightened smile came to her lips. "How could I be?"

"That's all right, then," Henry said stiffly. "As for my giving up, I mean to take a holiday fairly soon. And I dare say I shall retire one of these days and David will take over. But it won't be for quite a while."

There was a constrained silence. Then Cora said that she must go.

NEXT morning at the office everything seemed normal. Henry was congratulating himself that his attitude in ignoring the letter had proved effective when, at eleven o'clock, another note was delivered to him.

If we do not hear from you within twenty-four hours we shall be forced to make public certain information of a most damaging nature, concerning your daughter-in-law, which is now in our possession.

Henry stared at it rigidly, repeating to himself, "Concerning your daughter-in-law." He might have been dismayed if the tone of the thing had not made his blood boil. That he, Henry Page, should receive such a threat, in his own office—it was infamous.

Now, indeed, he could not hesitate; strong and immediate action was imperative. He instructed Moffat to telephone Smith that he would see him at three o'clock that afternoon. Then he thought of Cora: she must, of course, in fairness to herself, be on hand. The cottage was without a telephone; it was not easy to reach her. He wired her to come to the office at the same hour.

It took all Henry's strength of mind to get through the day. He did not go out for lunch, but instead ate a few biscuits from the tin he kept in his drawer. Restlessly he watched the hands of the office clock move slowly towards the afternoon.

Cora was the first to appear; she came early, at quarter to three. Under the pretext of being busy he asked her to wait in Miss Moffat's room.

The next fifteen minutes passed with intolerable slowness. Henry felt his heart beginning to thud . . . harder and harder. He was forced to crush one of the ampoules that he carried now for emergencies, in the little case at the end of his watch chain.

He had barely finished inhaling it, and his face was still flushed from the drug, when Smith arrived, accompanied not only by Nye but by another younger man whom Henry had never seen before.

"You had my letters." It was Smith

FASHION—3

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"I wonder if I could persuade John to sell the bungalow"

The Northern Light

continued from page 42

who spoke first, and his voice sounded hoarse.

"Both of them," Henry answered. Then, as he had resolved to be calm: "Will you sit down?"

They sat down. A short pause followed, then Smith cleared his throat. His face had a sweaty pallor.

"Mr. Page," he began haltingly, yet as if rehearsed, "I have no personal animus against you. At the same time, circumstances can arise in which a man in my position is obliged to take certain steps in his own interest. Mr. Page, it's a painful thing to say. . . but information has come to us which we feel we must put before you."

"If I am to believe your letters, it concerns my daughter-in-law."

NYE flicked ash from his cigarette. "You've said it," he threw in.

"In that case, though it may strike you as too fine a point of honour, if you have anything to say against her I prefer you to say it in her presence."

"Wait, Mr. Page. You'd better hear us first. We don't want to hurt——"

"Oh, cut it out, Smith," Nye said. "For God's sake, come to the point."

"Very well, then," Henry said. "I'll hear you. But I hope you are conversant with the law of slander."

"Look here," Nye broke in. "Let me take over." He stubbed out his cigarette and fixed Page with a cold, protruding eye. "You print a pretty pure paper, don't you? You're so lily white inside and out you've probably never heard the word abortion?"

"I . . . I know the word," Page said, taken aback.

"I hoped you might," Nye sneered. "It makes things easier. Then you probably know that when a young woman gets in trouble, and isn't married, she hies to some old bag in a back street who relieves her of her encumbrance. Unfortunately, however, there's a nasty little law known as the Offences Against the Person Act, eighteen sixty-one, which says that if a woman unlawfully permits the use of any instrument or other means to procure her own miscarriage she is guilty of a felony. . . ."

"That's enough," Smith said thickly. "Mr. Page, it's painful to have to tell you. In August three years ago your daughter-in-law, then Cora Bates, was convicted under that Act."

Henry stared at him, petrified.

"No . . . no . . . I don't believe it."

Nye pointed to the third man. "Haines here was on the case . . . followed it from first to last. Isn't that so, Jack?"

"I'm afraid so, sir." Haines looked at Page with a vague apology. "I must say the punishment was very lenient, under the special circumstances. It was a light sentence."

"Sentence?" Gripping the arms of his chair, Henry could barely speak the word.

"Six months."

Henry's heart failed him; for a long moment it halted in its beat. He had believed some accusation possible, but never this fatal thing, so far beyond the worst of his imaginings that suddenly everything within him rose up in revolt . . . he could not, and would not, accept it.

"It's impossible . . . a lie. She's here . . . she'll deny it."

"All right, fetch her in," Nye said. "Then we'll see who's the liar."

Henry rose to summon her, then sank back into his chair. Frozen by doubt, he could not decide what to do. While he still hesitated, the side door giving access to Moffat's room opened. Tired of waiting, Cora had come to see if he were free. Never would he forget her face as, in an instant of comprehension, she took in the scene before her. A mortal stillness fell upon the room, then, terrified, she gasped: "Excuse me . . . I didn't know. . . ." and started to back out.

"Wait a bit," Nye said. "There's a gentleman here has come quite a way to see you."

She stopped, as if she had no power to resist.

"I think you remember me?" Haines said.

"No . . . I never seen you before." The reply was so indistinct as to be barely audible.

"I beg your pardon, Miss . . . at least you were Miss Bates then . . . I have the press clippings on me, with the photographs, and the statement you signed in the hospital."

He felt in his inside pocket. Page thought Cora would fall. She began to cry, a hard, dry sobbing without tears that shook all of her body. He could not bear it.

"That's enough," he said to Smith. "For God's sake, leave us."

"Are you convinced?" Nye said as he got up.

Smith also had risen. He stood by the desk, not looking at Page, his dispatch case in his hand, perspiration beading his forehead.

"Now look, Mr. Page. Nobody need know a thing about this. We'll keep it as secret as the grave. The solution's quite simple. I've drafted a little agreement, all perfectly open and above board." He fumbled, opened the dispatch case. "I'm sure you'll want to accept it. Then we'll never print a word of your little bit of trouble."

"Go, please, all of you. I'll talk with you later."

Smith put a long manilla envelope on the desk and led the way towards the door.

WHEN they had gone Page turned to Cora. She was still crying and, with her arm across her face, had leaned blindly against the wall.

He tried to find a consoling word, but he could not. It was she who broke the silence.

"It's true . . . true . . . what they told you. But perhaps they didn't tell you everything . . . that ever since I was sixteen, I've been on my own. One summer I took a seven-day trip to Blackpool; so help me, I'd saved up for it for months. I went dancing at the Pally. The manager saw me and offered me a job. I took it. He was nice to me and I was lonely. I'd always been lonely. It made me soft, made me want to find somebody to love.

"I never knew he was married . . . not at first, I didn't. He didn't care about me really; he was a rotter, all right. When he found out I was that way he was furious at me. He was afraid his wife would find out. He said he knew what to do. I didn't care much, the way he'd treated me; I let him take me to that place. A woman there did things to me. I thought I was going to die and I wanted to. She got frightened and fetched a doctor. He put me in the hospital and then it all came out."

She almost broke down but forced herself to go on. "I was in the hospital for eight weeks. When they let me out the police took me. . . ."

"Don't, Cora. . . ." Pity made him rise and go to her. "You've said enough."

"I got to tell you, if it kills me. When I came out they wanted to get me a job in Blackpool. But I'd had enough of that place. I saw an advert for my sort of job in Scarborough. I went there. The work was easy. It was selling doughnuts and that like, in a stall on the front. But I couldn't get back to myself. I had no feeling, except I felt like I was really dead.

"Every evening when I closed up at six, I'd go for a walk by the harbour. And there, on the end of a bench, I'd usually see him. It was David. There was something about him. One night I couldn't help myself. I spoke to him."

Another spasm racked her.

"That was the start. I didn't dare tell him about myself. But we was in the same boat. I knew it just by looking at him. I wanted to help him. And I think I have helped him. I've been a good wife. But if he gets to know, it'll be the end; I don't know what will happen to us."

A FINAL sob shook her, and turning convulsively, she came towards him as though, forsaken by all the world, she begged for his support.

"Don't cry," he said, holding her. "And don't on any account say anything to David. There must be something we can do about it."

"I couldn't help myself . . . it happened to me . . . that's all. But what must you think . . . you especially? After all you done for me, I been and brought this on you. Oh, can't you see it . . . you're the one that counts."

As she said these words she stopped short, looked at him wildly and, before he could detain her, broke away and ran out of the room.

He had to let her go. Heavily, he sat down and, bent over the desk with his head between his hands, tried to collect his scattered forces and brace himself against the final shattering disaster. *What a mess*, he thought, *what a frightful mess*! His first reaction of anger and disgust was gone, supplanted by compassion. He could not

FASHION—4

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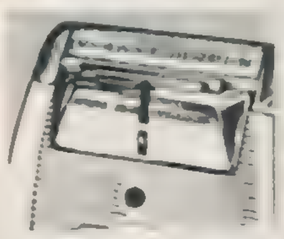

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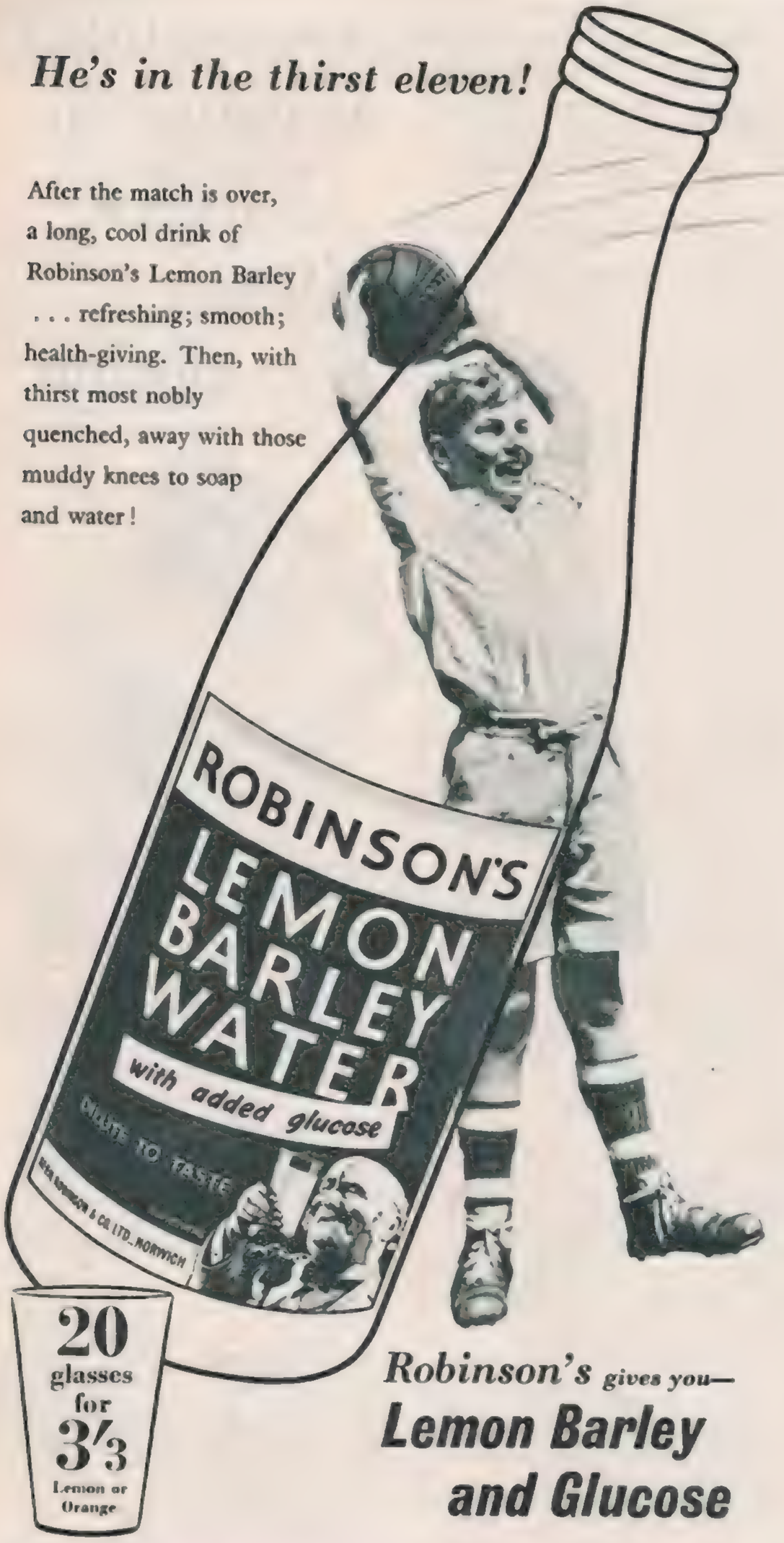

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The Northern Light

continued from previous page

blame her, yet for him, and for the *Light*, the consequences were fatal.

Instinctively, he took up the contract Smith had placed upon his desk and read it through. It was not a swindling agreement; in fact, of its kind, it was strictly fair—Smith, in his attempts at self-exoneration, had used all his efforts to make it so, justly proportioning the assets of the two papers and assessing their goodwill on the relative sales over the past twelve months. Yet, while the end result might be financially adequate, Page was left with no illusions as to his situation. He was to be dispossessed. If he refused to give up the *Light*, the whole story of Cora's past, linked to its present setting and suitably embellished, would be headlined in Hedleston and in every Somerville paper in the country.

A TREMOR passed over Henry as he envisaged that appalling publicity. How they would scarify him, the man of probity and principle, who stood foursquare against corruption. Alice, with her social ambitions, would not be spared, nor David, the deluded husband; even Dorothy would have to take her share—none of them would escape.

They would all be dragged through the mud with the skill of hands long practised in that art. The result for him would undoubtedly be social and political extinction. For David it would be so much worse that he scarcely dared to contemplate it: this shock would destroy him.

As for Cora, would she not suffer worst of all? The knowledge that she had brought this trouble upon them would surely break her heart.

He rose suddenly, and began to pace the floor. How could he see this hurt inflicted on her, and on his family? He must yield, must give up the *Light*. But when he considered the long, bitter struggle he had waged, and the hard victory he had won, only to be robbed at the last moment, the blood mounted to his forehead. The *Light* was his inheritance, his tradition, his life. He could not surrender it to an ownership that would irretrievably debase it.

He swung round with a new sense of purpose. A glance at the clock showed half past seven—unconscious of the passage of time, he had lost almost three hours. Moffat must have gone at six as usual, quite unaware that anything was wrong. However, after a search he found a Bradshaw in the drawer of her desk.

The night train for London left at seventeen minutes to eight. He had not time to go home and pick up a suitcase. He would have to take a cab directly to the train. Quickly he wrote a note for Moffat, telling her he had been called unexpectedly to London. Next, he phoned his house; Alice was out, but he left a message, saying that, at the most, he would not be away for more than two nights. Then, taking his hat and coat, he left the office, and hurriedly set out for the station.

To be concluded next week

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Victor Gollancz Ltd. will publish "The Northern Light" as a novel on December 1, price 15s.

Catch a falling star

continued from page 8

the big drum and called out the prize-winning numbers. Andy edged his way round the side, looking for June.

She was sitting alone at a table in the far corner. He went across and said, "Can I sit down?"

She gave him a warm smile, and said, "You were wonderful."

Walter Lucas strolled over, and lit a cigar, grateful for the rest, his only break of the evening. He said, "You did that beautifully, Andy. When my boys laugh, it's really funny. Why not put it in your next television show?"

Walter leaned forward, waiting for a reply. June looked at him interestedly. Andy swallowed, and then stared Walter full in the eye. "Because," he said, "there isn't going to be any next television show."

Walter frowned. "But your next series. . . ."

"There isn't any next series." Andy kept on looking at Walter. From the tail of his eye, he could only discern the outline of June's face. "They're not going to renew my contract. I've flopped, Walter. My agent can hardly find me a booking, let alone a series."

WALTER tapped his cigar gently on the edge of the ashtray. June had turned in her chair, and was now looking across the ballroom.

Walter said, "I'm sorry, of course, but I'm not really surprised. I think your future lies in your ability to get inside a character. It's a caricature, maybe, but you make us see ourselves." He shook his head. "That slick, high pressure routine wasn't right. I don't know that you can carry a whole show, anyway. Certainly not with a style that doesn't belong to you. Start again. . . ."

Andy smiled shakily. "That means starting at the bottom."

"Pretty nearly." Walter studied the end of his cigar. "Have you thought where you might begin?"

"No."

"Here." Walter gestured round him. "We could use you in cabaret during the winter season anyway. It would give you a chance to think things out, work up some new ideas." A burst of applause came from the guests as someone won the grand prize. Walter said, "Back to the grind." He patted Andy's shoulder. "Think it over."

Andy looked at June. Her eyes were very wide. He said, "Are you expecting Mr. McCabe back?"

She dropped her eyes, and went slightly pink. She said, "He's the district organizer for the charity. I'm his secretary. That's what I'm doing here. Helping."

He grinned at her. "That's the first good news I've heard for a long time. Are you allowed to dance?"

HER body was firm against his, soft strands of her hair touched his cheek. They danced in silence.

June leaned back and looked at him. Her cheeks were still bright. She said, "Will you be staying now?"

"I only really came back to see you. You said it was no good. Nothing's changed because I've failed. I'll get back up there—one day."

"All alone?" she asked gently. "Like it was before?"

He looked down into her eyes, seeing the beauty and the sadness too. "No," he said. "It's no good like that."

June said, "A woman has to be needed, or else she dies in a sort of way."

"I need you," he said. "My God, how I need you." She put one arm round his neck.

The music stopped, and they clapped automatically. Andy said, "Yes. I shall stay."

She took his hand. They moved into the next dance; and, when Andy realized what the tune was, he began to sing softly in her ear. "Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket. . . ."

"You're off key," June said. "You never could sing."

Andy smiled down at her. He said, "I like the words." THE END

© *N. J. Crisp, 1958*

"It's through!"

Teach him a lesson

continued from page 24

jerkily, his eyes afraid. "He tole me you wanted gun and Dugong, boss. I give 'im. I doan do nuthin'. . . ."

Gibson's big hand tightened on the shirt, screwing it as fear and anger tore at his insides; anger at Charlie for giving Billy the gun; fear for what might happen to the boy out there in the half-light where death from a dozen spears could come without his even seeing the naked men who threw them.

"Get me a horse," he snapped.

He crawled back into the wagon, buckled on his pistol, and filled his pockets with ammunition. He took the automatic shotgun, stuffed spare cartridges inside his shirt, and went out from the camp at a gallop as Margaret came running up. He didn't stop.

THEN the horse, a tall roan, was weaving through the spinifex, and he needed all his riding skill to keep his full weight off the injured leg. He sat lopsided in the saddle, making his good left leg take most of the pressure; even so the right was screaming with the agony of grating bones. But the fear that gripped his mind rejected pain.

He heard another shot, ahead and to the right. He swerved the roan, drew his pistol, and began firing into the air to announce his coming both to Billy and to any spearmen who might be skulking around. The dawn had come, but there was nothing to be seen.

Then the roan was slithering down into the gully, and Gibson saw Dugong and the boy scrambling up the far side. He raced across the broken floor, past the line of myall sleeping fires, and up after the boy. He pumped the shotgun as he regained the plain, sprayed shots at random into the surrounding spinifex to flush out any ambush. Then he reined up alongside Billy, and tore the rifle from his hands. "Get back to camp," he told him.

Billy turned a dead-white face and grinned; a caricature of a grin, a twist of stiffened lips. "Look," he yelled. "They're running."

Gibson looked. Far out on the plain, black dots of men were bobbing and weaving in panic flight. Even at that distance he could discern their fear.

He watched them, with narrowed eyes, until they dwindled out of sight. Then he sat motionless for a moment longer, piecing his thoughts together.

The myalls had gone for good. They would not come back, and that was satisfaction. The job he couldn't do had been done for him.

Suddenly he was trembling inwardly with the let-down of his fear for Billy Andrews. He wanted to whirl on the boy, to rage at him, to turn him bottom up and beat him with the flat of his hand. But he knew that would be wrong, worse, in fact, than his hitherto enforced lack of interest. He slung the shotgun over his back, thumbed on the safety catch of the rifle and handed it to the boy. He said: "Did you hit any of them?"

Billy shook his head. "No. I aimed high . . . you said frighten them."

"Did any try to fight?"

"One man was going to throw a spear," Billy said, and suddenly his blue eyes widened. "But Dugong charged at him, and he ran away."

Gibson looked steadily at the boy, seeing the white scaredness in his face and admiring the spirit that was keeping it from breaking out. This, he knew, was a fine boy; a boy worth working for, worth looking after.

"Billy," he said sternly. "I told you never to touch my guns. I told you to leave the myalls alone. Your mother told you, too."

"Aw, gee," Billy said. His face screwed up, twisting the freckles out of shape. "You said it was best to hit them straight away . . . and you were hurt. I only wanted to help."

GIBSON felt like a betrayer. He wanted to hug the boy and say: "You did a man's job." Instead he said: "Billy, you're going to have to learn some discipline; to do what you're told until you're old enough to run your own affairs."

"Yessir," Billy said.

"You'll ride in the wagon for the next two weeks, and do all the camp chores," Gibson said coldly. "After that, if you've learned your lesson, maybe you'll get a horse again. Maybe. It depends on you."

He saw the lips tremble and the tears start. Then Billy's face wavered, grew big and retreated, loomed big again. Gibson could feel the sweat pouring from his body, but he was cold. The pain surged through him.

"C'mon, Billy," he mumbled. "Let's get back to camp."

They turned and he felt the boy's small arm go round him and, for all its smallness, it gave him strength. They rode down into the gully where the myalls' sleeping fires still smouldered, but Gibson didn't see them because the day and the land were blotted out. He moved inside a black mist of pain, feeling the comfort of the boy beside him.

Then he was conscious of movement, noises, of stronger arms round him.

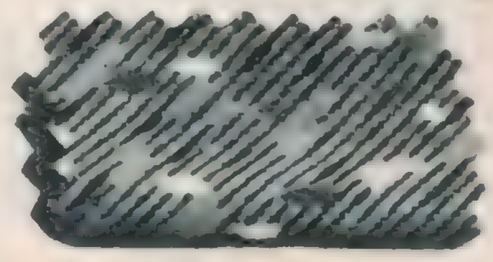
"Boss," Charlie Big Toe said hoarsely. "You orright, boss?"

"Yeah," Gibson muttered. "I'm all right." He forced his eyes open with effort, and Margaret was beside him. Her face was white and drawn, and beautiful. "Billy's all right, too," he whispered. "I've taken away his horse."

"Don't talk." She leaned across and kissed him on the lips. "You don't need to tell me anything." She smiled. "You've never needed to." THE END

© *Edward Lindall, 1958*

it's so like wool —



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Billy Wallace—The Boy Friend

continued from page 19

fact if not in name, stage manager of the show.

But most of the publicity centred on the nightclub parties which Wallace and the Princess attended after rehearsals had ended in the small hours. By the time the performance was over he was firmly fixed in the public mind as the Princess's playboy escort. Hardly anyone knew that the show raised £10,000, which was used to open a crippled children's home at Worthing.

"Why is the Princess always with him?" someone asked a member of the Court at about this time.

"He makes her laugh," was the reply.

His name began to arouse smug satisfaction in the breasts of the hard-headed financiers who control London's nightclubs.

The news that he was visiting a club travelled like wildfire through the West End, and the place quickly filled up. However, Wallace's own wine bill was usually among the most modest.

Waiters learned not to expect ostentatious tipping from him. He gauged to a nicety the amount which those who served him should have, avoiding meanness, but showing an acute consciousness that there are eight half-crowns in a pound.

When Billy Wallace fades from the night spots and the headlines the cause is nearly always the same: his health.

Illness and death surrounded him in his boyhood and youth. When he was four he suffered from an obscure complaint which baffled the doctors. Recovery was slow and left him a weakly child.

Then, in 1940, when he was just in his teens, he had to endure the knowledge that his father (Captain Euan Wallace, former Minister of Transport in Neville Chamberlain's prewar Government) was suffering from a painful and prolonged illness which would almost inevitably kill him. He was an acutely sensitive boy with a deep affection for his father, and Captain Wallace's death in 1941 brought him a sense of desolation.

He spent only one term at Eton and then was sent to Millfield, a public school in Street, Somerset. One of his classmates there, now a doctor, says of him: "He was a trier, but always seemed to miss what he wanted by the merest fluke. In schoolwork he was always up against someone just that much more brilliant. In games, which he played with an intensity that made up for lack of natural flair, he fluffed easy catches and held hard ones, miskicked on a stationary ball, yet held an impossible pass, led for 430 yards and stumbled a foot from the tape."

Work in a factory

Three of his brothers died in the war in quick succession—one in Coastal Command, one in a bomber shot down over Berlin and one with the guerrillas in Greece—and by the time he was sixteen Wallace had announced that he wanted to help the war effort until he was old enough to join the Services. He went to work at an aircraft factory at Reading.

"He worked all right," one of the foremen said. "He got a bit of ribbing because he was obviously a cut above the other workmen, but on the whole they liked him. He used to make them laugh."

Perhaps this was the first time that Billy Wallace found that laughter could evade seriousness.

As soon as his age permitted he joined the Guards. Then came more bad news. John, his favourite brother in the Life Guards, died under an anaesthetic during an operation.

As the only survivor of five brothers, Wallace inherited a fortune from his Scottish grandfather and his father. It has been said to be about £1 million. In fact death duties and legal expenses have made it much less.

With the war over he resumed his interrupted education at University College, Oxford. It was here that he began to develop the brittle and superficial manner which he finds so effective for disguising his real feelings.

Far more widely read than he would care to admit, he thought that he might help history to repeat itself by forming a set of undergraduates similar to those described in Evelyn Waugh's novels of the early 1920s. He became president of the Bullingdon Club, traditionally the mingling of champagne, wit and rich young men.

"He was a brilliant and unpredictable president," one of his contemporaries related. "But sometimes the gaiety was a bit hollow, and we had a feeling we weren't as irresponsible and carefree as we pretended."

Recurring illness

Few people realized that for long periods Wallace seldom lived without pain. His trouble was diagnosed as both a liver and a kidney complaint. However, after a course of treatment at Middlesex Hospital, he is now enjoying good health.

Until two years ago he was an enthusiastic and fairly skilful player with the Beechwood Polo Club at Brockenhurst in the New Forest. His car mascot was a silver polo player.

Wryly he will confess that long familiarity with pain has made him patient and tolerant about it. After his illness in infancy he had another period in hospital brought on largely by overwork in the aircraft industry in his teens. It was then that he became actively interested in the work of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, for which he has raised thousands of pounds. None knows better than he the awful despondency created in a child's mind by weeks and months in bed.

After he left Oxford, he took a job in a firm of City merchant bankers in Old Broad Street, refusing to accept any salary until he had learned enough to be useful. But, ill-health forced him to give it up. When he was better again he walked into the offices of a charter air company near Marble Arch and asked for a job.

He was handed an application form and filled it in:

Typing speed: *nil.*

Secretarial experience: *nil.*

Special qualifications: *none.*

But when asked what was his ambition he said: "To be a managing director." He was given a job as assistant to the sales manager at £8 a week.

This involved selling tickets for the company's car-ferry service to France. Hundreds of holiday-makers who called at the air company's offices were impressed by the patient courtesy of the polite young clerk who seemed to have such an encyclopaedic knowledge of the length of every make of car—a factor which affects the price of ferry tickets.

"He was really helpful," one girl recalled. "Even advised me what clothes to take. It wasn't until a day or two later that I recognized his face in the paper and I said to my father: 'Fancy me talking about warm undies to Princess Margaret's young man.'"

Wallace probably saw nothing incongruous in the situation. "Before a man is thirty," he once said, "he has the right to try as many jobs as he likes." He is now thirty-one.

At home, he is looked after by a cook and housekeeper, who also have to care for his Labrador dog, Lorna. Friends remark that, as a host, he is often ill at ease. For most of his life, he lived with his mother and stepfather (Herbert Agar, American diplomat and author) at the beautiful Dower House of Lavington Hall, near Petworth in Sussex. Now, although he likes to give small dinner parties for six or eight guests, he is more at home in fashionable restaurants.

His housekeeper, Dorothy Hart, who was once his nursemaid, claims, probably with justice, to know his feelings and intentions better than anyone. "When Mr. Billy is going to get married," she once said, "he will tell me first."

The comment was a reference to the repeated rumours of the engagement of Billy Wallace. His name has been linked with a succession of beautiful girls, among them Sharman Douglas, daughter of a former American ambassador in London, Kay Kendall, fashion model Anne Parker, Joanna Smith Bingham and Barbara Lyon. Courteously and patiently, Wallace has denied all the romances.

One other person who has known all the facts of the alleged Wallace romances has been Judy Montagu. On many occasions pretty girls, thrilled at being asked out to dinner by him, have been sadly disillusioned when Judy comes too. He never explains her presence. He just takes it for granted that she should be there.

Only Judy Montagu could have planned—as she once did—a party which was exactly what Wallace would wish. She engaged decorator Felix Harboard to create in her own home an enchanted wood of tall cypresses, fruit and blossoms falling from the ceiling, soft lights, secrecy and mystery.

Leave before dawn

The effect was fabulous. "It is so lovely," one guest said as it grew late, "that I must leave before the dawn breaks and the illusion vanishes. I cannot bear to wake up!"

"On the contrary," Judy Montagu said, her voice rather sharp. "I like reality. I like to see the cracks in the ceiling, to know that life is real, not just play-acting."

Only once has Wallace publicly joined in the speculation about the sort of girl he will marry. An *Any Questions* programme was being held at Seaford College with Mark Bonham-Carter, Douglas Fairbanks, Gilbert Harding and Joan Gilbert on the panel. Wallace was in the audience and enlivened the rather lethargic proceedings by standing up and saying: "My mum says that I ought to choose a nice girl and get married. What kind of girl does the panel consider makes an ideal wife?"

The replies were vague and non-committal. Wallace has given his own answer "She must be very fond of me, a good cook, terribly efficient, simply beautiful." THE END

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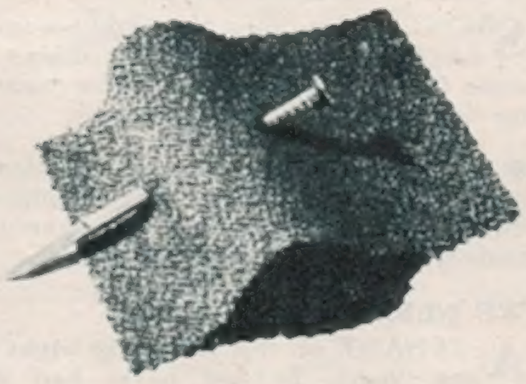

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Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to the JOHN BULL Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page.

We advise...

MY car's tyres are wearing very unevenly, with hollows in the front tyre treads. I have always been careful to keep to the pressures recommended. Is there any explanation—and what is the cure?—W. G., London, W.1.

● You probably have a car with independent front suspension. The trouble is due to several factors: inaccurate wheel alignment (caused by bumping against kerbs, etc.), wheels out of balance and the need for the shock absorbers to be topped up with fluid. None of these is really a job for the amateur.

SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE

SMOKE comes down our sitting-room fireplace when we light our dining-room fire. Tall chimney pots have made no difference.—M. M., Liverpool.

● Probably a brick or two has fallen out of the stack between the two chimneys. This is something you cannot remedy yourself—consult a builder.

WE NEED A NEW TANK

A TENANT of this house for eighteen years, I have never had a tenancy agreement in writing. A new water-tank has now become necessary and the gate leading to the house is in such a state of decay that it has collapsed. The landlord says both are my responsibility. How do I stand?—G. A., Sevenoaks.

● As there is no agreement to the contrary, the landlord is liable for repairs and it is probable that the sanitary inspector could order him to repair the water-tank or to replace it. It is unlikely that the inspector could compel him to repair the gate, but you cannot be made to replace it.

NEED I PAY?

MY wife died many years ago. Since then I have had a housekeeper, and have been paying the employer's portion of National Insurance. This has been increased from time to time and I cannot afford the payment. Is there any way out of my difficulty?—J. L., Porthcawl.

● As it appears that you employ the lady concerned under a contract of service, i.e., the normal relationship between employer and employee, you are compelled to pay National Insurance contributions in respect of her. You cannot claim relief because of low income.

SEASHELL SETTING

DURING the holidays my daughter collected an assortment of tiny seashells, and she would like me to make them up into ear-rings and brooches for presents. Is there any material that I could set them into?—Mrs. I. J., Herts.

● Barbola paste is suitable for setting seashells. Some plastic cements will also do. They can be obtained from a home handicraft supplier, as can the brooch backs which you may need.

PROMPT PAYMENT

I BOUGHT a motor-cycle under a two-year hire purchase agreement, but have paid for it completely in less than a year. Can I claim a rebate?—W. Livingstone, Cowdenbeath.

● It is usual to make some rebate in such circumstances, but unless there is a clause in your agreement providing for it, you cannot compel the company to make you any allowance.

HEIGHT TROUBLE

I AM redecorating a bedroom with rather a high ceiling. This spoils the proportions of the room, and I am wondering whether I can make it appear lower by painting it some dark colour like deep plum or midnight blue? Could you advise me?—H. C., Enfield.

● In fact, very dark colours on such ceilings make them appear loftier still. The best solution to this problem is to use a colour which is about two shades darker than the walls. Test with colour samples—hold them above your head so that you can get the true effect of light and shade on the ceiling, before you make your choice.

MAKING WINE

A FEW months ago you published an article on wine by Robert Holles (JOHN BULL, July 19). Will you please let me know the name and address of the firm which sells the equipment mentioned in the article?—J. D., Headcorn, Kent.

● Suppliers of wine-making equipment are Messrs. W. R. Loftus, Ltd., 24 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1.

A MARBLE EYESORE

OUR sitting-room has a heavy imitation marble fireplace with an overhanging mantelpiece and we should like to have it altered. Would the best thing be to demolish it—or could it be altered with fluted asbestos?—A. M., Leyland, Lancs.

● You'd have to get a builder to demolish your fireplace. The simplest answer would be to build a wooden frame round the existing fireplace and, using it as a basis, fit a fluted asbestos panel.

You will need a free standing convector fire, and I recommend a Redfyre, or a Hurdapta.

OLD AGE RELIEF

WILL you please tell me all about income tax relief for people over sixty-five years of age?—J. B., Wellingborough.

● Old age relief, which is granted to persons over sixty-five, only affects unearned income because earned income automatically qualifies for the two-ninths deduction, irrespective of whether the person concerned is over or under sixty-five years of age.

If a person is more than sixty-five years of age and has investments which produce a total income of less than £800, he will be granted two-ninths tax relief against his investment income, thus putting it on the same basis as earned income.

CURING FLIES

I AM very much troubled by flies in my larder, but I am reluctant to spray with an insecticide for fear of tainting food. Is there any product I can use?—H. Y. S., Lanark.

● A lasting cure for this trouble is an insecticide paint called Lakil, which you can use on all woodwork in your larder. It does not smell, is as easy to apply as any other paint, lasts just as long, and is effective all its life. Even fierce cleaning with detergents will not impair its insecticide properties. Lakil gloss paint costs 11s. 2d. a pint in several colours. Lakil clear varnish, 10s. 4d. a pint. Buy them from your local paint dealer.

STOP THE CHIPS

I AM having difficulty drilling holes in the wall for plugs and screws to hold curtain rods, etc. Is there any way to stop plaster chipping?—T. M., Wigan, Lancs.

● Try sticking a small piece of cellulose tape over the place before you start drilling. This will stop chipping while you drill, and can be removed afterwards.

A FRIGHTENED DOG

OUR ten-month-old Alsatian is highly intelligent and full of life, but in the street he is scared of everything—cars and people. This fear developed when he was about five months old. Can anything be done to cure him?—F. A. M., Norbury, London, S.W.16.

● Evidently your dog had some frightening experience which it has never forgotten.

Take him to some place where there is traffic and encourage him to sit there for five minutes or so. Don't show that you are worried about him. Then make a fuss of him.

After a while he should get accustomed to traffic. It might also be helpful to take him for walks with a dog which is not frightened of traffic.

PANEL STAINING

THE paint on the matchboard panelling in my hall was very chipped so I have stripped it off altogether. Now, I like it so much that I think I would rather stain it than repaint it. The colour I have in mind is a sort of bluish-grey, but I do not see it in any of the catalogues. Can you tell me where I can find stain of this colour?—L. T., Newark.

● There is a new mix-it-yourself wood *dye* kit made by Furniglas which contains ingredients for mixing your own colours. This way you can get exactly the shade you want. The dye penetrates into the grain of the wood, and can be wax-polished, or treated as you like. The kits costs 6s.—enough for about fifty square feet.

LIFE IN NIGERIA

OFFERED the chance of a job in Nigeria, I would like information on the cost of living and taxation. Is there any unrest there? — T. J. D., Morpeth.

● For people with a European standard of living and pay, the cost of living is lower in Nigeria than in Britain.

Full details about conditions—there may be complete self-government by 1960—can be obtained from the Nigeria Office, 41 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.

O.K.?

HOW did the term O.K. originate? Do the letters stand for anything?—D. B., Welwyn, Herts.

● The phrase originated in the United States. One explanation is that President Andrew Jackson used the Choctaw Indian word *hokeh*, which means "it is so and in no other way."

NAIL THE CREAKS

DURING the summer every step in our stairs creaks. How can I stop it?—A. H., Loanhead, Midlothian.

● You could probably stop your stairs creaking by nailing the steps more firmly to the risers. Two stout nails through each step would be sufficient.

A word of warning: it is important when knocking nails into stairs or floorboards to be sure the nails will not penetrate electric cables or water pipes.

There should be no danger if you drive your nails straight through the fore-edge of the step into the riser below.

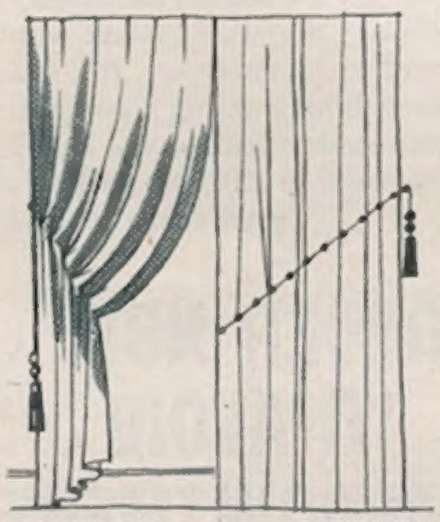
In our issue of October 4, the price of Glitsa, the floor seal, was misprinted. The correct price is 71s. 7d. a gallon.

a hint for hanging curtains

I WOULD like to loop up my living-room curtains at the side so that they hang in deep swags like old-fashioned theatre curtains. Can you tell me how to do this?—P. G., New Alyth, Perthshire.

● To achieve this effect you must sew a row of curtain rings diagonally across the back of each curtain as shown in the drawing. Attach a length of cord to the lowest ring, thread through the others and finish with a tassel.

When you want to draw the curtain back, you simply pull the cord and secure it to a hook at the side of the window.



FRONT VIEW BACK VIEW

NOW for FUN with WORDS

—and win all you need for CHRISTMAS SHOPPING!

WHAT—the bank won't give you a "personal loan" for Christmas shopping? Never mind. *Win* the cash—for Fun with Words!

For instance, Christmas shopping won't worry Mr. R. Chalk, of Watford. He's just banked £500, all for the fun of adding a few words to a Bullets Example.

Go £50 better! Enter this week's best effort on your coupon below and *you* win TWO grand rewards. One—that £500 fortune to use as you wish. The other—a £50 "Christmas Shopping Award" for your most exciting spending spree ever!

£500
CASH 1st PRIZE plus CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SPREE —off you go to the shops you know —Bullets pays all the bills up to . . .
£50

1,550 OTHER PRIZES for BULLETS

£25, £10, £9, £8, £7, £6, 4 of £5, 10 of £2 10s.,

50 XMAS FOWLS One with each prize from £25 to £2 10s.—PLUS 30 additional Fowls for Runners-up.

1,500 "Good Shots" each with £1,000 surprise

ICED CHRISTMAS CAKES—see coupon below

WAY TO WIN

Here's how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

Ahead Of America	The Shop Was Full, But
Winter's On The Way, So	Villainous
Symphony Of Peace	On Easy Terms
Some Mysterious Power	Brightened Her Day
Mandarin Mao	Off To The City
Threats And Warnings	In Hobnailed Boots
The Fishermen	Blazing With Indignation
Going By The Book	Knows His Onions
Armed To The Teeth	Wildly Applauded
To Get Results	Dad Went To The Bank And

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

In The Rush For.....	Spurring ..... On
Victim Of.....	A Little Less.....
Thing That's.....	Why The.....Was Late

EXAMPLE .....

BULLET _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

XMAS CAKES

A big iced Christmas Cake goes to each of the 21 chief winners whose successful Bullet was one of five or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

2,165 Post not later than last collection on **MONDAY, NOV. 3**

I agree to rules and enclose P.O. entry-fee at the rate of 6d. per Bullet.

Signed.....

Address .....

P.O. Value.....

No.....

ENTRY FEE 6d. PER "BULLET"

LATEST WINNERS

Bullets No. 2,160 Result:

£1,250 "Own - Your - Home" Award, or £1,000 lump sum: H. Dunton, 59 Manor House Road, Wednesbury:

At The Conference Table—More "Yellow"—*Less* "Peril"!

£50 W. J. Nott, "Rose Cottage," Bickington, Barnstaple: **Unscrupulous Scoundrel—"Grabs" Wages And—*Dawdles*!**

£25 E. R. Dennis, 13 Curry Street, Manchester: **Home To Be Proud Of—Over Dover's "White Doorstep."**

£20 A. Houghton, 59 Blaguegate Lane, Lathom, Ormskirk: **At The Conference Table — Earphones, Microphones—"Gramophones"!**

£15 G. E. Lanigan, 26 South Drive, Manchester: **What Our MP Said — At Intervals — "But Madam—!"**

£10 J. Booth, 138 Brookhill Street, Stapleford, Notts: **Tonic For Us All—Moderation—In Large Doses!**

£9 E. W. Sym, 10 Park Road, London, N.W.4: **Youngster Of Tomorrow — Cyprus — If "Adult" *Today*!**

£8 W. Cotton, "Vlamertinghe," Avenue Road, Freshwater, I.o.W.: **May Soon Be Britain's—Satellite—Gas-stove *Dad's* Fixing!**

£7 Mrs. O. M. Bishop, 37 Kingshill Park, Dursley, Glos: **Above The Tumult—Of Factory Creche—"Mummy!"**

£6 J. P. Sutton, 15 Burlington Road, West Bromwich: **On The Wings Of The Wind—"Vultures"—"Wind" Of *Win*!**

£5 W. Donaghy, 76 Highfield Road, Barrow-in-Furness: **Above The Tumult — Solicitor Shouted *Minor* Bequests!**

For ten winners of £4 see *Bullets Bulletin*. 100 Birthday Specials and 3,000 "Good Shot" Awards have also been posted.

RULES

1. First Prize for best Bullet received; others in order of merit. The test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. at the rate of 6d. per Bullet. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated November 29), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, November 15, for early news of No. 2,165 result.)

POST ENTRY

Bullets 2,165, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

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SENSATIONAL OPPORTUNITY!

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This lovely LAMP **FREE!** *with any model purchased*

★ *Lamp has ceramic base in rich burgundy with matching braid trimming on its handsome shade.*

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Model HBS. Solid Oak locking Desk, 8 compartments, 2 big glass-fronted shelves. 30 in. wide, 39 in. high. **£14.13.0, or 28/- down, 14 monthly payments of 20/-; or,** as illustrated, wooden slides, **£15.9.0, or 24/6 down and 15 monthly payments of 20/-.**

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Model BGF. 30 in. wide, 24 in. high. Flush top, TWO large glass-fronted shelves. Bottom shelf holds some encyclopaedias. **£7. 17s. or 15/- down and 10 monthly payments of 15/-.**

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To: **Odhams Press Ltd., Bookcase Division, J.Z.15, Basted, Sevenoaks, Kent.**

WITHOUT OBLIGATION send me illustrated brochure describing full range of "Solida" Bookcases, and details of FREE LAMP OFFER. *(Offer applies Gt. Britain and N. Ireland only.)*

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